



# Pro-euro Conservatives win the game of the name



WILLIAM HAGUE suffered a fresh blow yesterday when Conservative officials failed to prevent breakaway pro-European Tories from registering a new political party yesterday.

The new Registrar of Political Parties brushed aside Tory objections that the name of the Pro-Euro Conservative Party was too similar to that of the official Conservative Party.

The decision opens the way for the group to put up a comprehensive list of candidates

Rebels could steal European seats from Hague, writes James Landale

for the European elections in June. If the party campaigns hard, it could win a handful of seats.

But more importantly, and more likely, it could steal enough Tory votes to reduce substantially the number of seats that William Hague is expected to win.

The Pro-Euro Conservative Party was set up by two MEPs who defected from the Tories in January in protest at

Mr Hague's opposition to the European single currency.

John Stevens, MEP for Thames Valley, said: "Conservatives who had thought their only options were to vote for Labour, the Liberal Democrats or stay at home, can now vote Conservative and in favour of the euro. We will do all we can to build up support for a nationwide campaign which pro-euro Conservatives can support."

Brendan Donnelly, who is Member of the European Parliament for Sussex South and Crawley, said: "Until now, the policies of William Hague have implied that Conservatives can only be anti-euro."

"Our successful registration proves that it is possible to be both a Conservative and in favour of the euro."

Several breakaway Labour parties have been registered under the rules created by the

Registration of Political Parties Act.

The legislation was introduced to prevent confusion among electors after some candidates used party names almost identical to those of the mainstream parties.

Hugh Kerr, an MEP expelled from Labour last year after being banned for being too critical of election procedures, is standing for the Scottish Socialist Party.

Ken Coates, another MEP expelled from the Labour Party at the same time, is heading the new Alternative Labour List in the East Midlands region.

Forty-nine parties in all, including the ten with House of Commons seats, have so far been formally registered to fight for seats in this summer's elections to the Scottish parliament, the Welsh assembly, and to the European Parliament.

Letters, page 23

**NEWS IN BRIEF**  
**Cardinal's offer on abortion**

Roman Catholic women in Scotland who have had an abortion have been invited back to the Church for a "fast-track" to salvation. Cardinal Thomas Wimberly, leader of Scotland's Catholics, used a speech to mark the second anniversary of his controversial "cash for babies" programme to remind women that they could "make peace with God and their unborn child".

His offer on Tuesday night was extended to women who have had abortions, doctors and nurses who have performed the procedure, and relatives who have counselled for abortions.

He has told priests in the Archdiocese of Glasgow that they no longer needed to refer to the bishop to give abortion to a woman who had had an abortion and sought forgiveness through confession.

**Three men held**

Three men were being questioned about the murder of Michael Mensah, a 30-year-old black musician found in a North London house suffering from burns. The men were arrested in the Edmonton area and were being held by the Yard's new racial and violent crime task force.

**Doping charges**

Five men including a professional gambler were charged after a Scotland Yard investigation with conspiracy to defraud bookmakers by doping horses to reduce their performance during March 1997. They will appear at Bow Street Magistrates' Court in April. Racing, page 42

**Party planner**

Allied Domecq, the brewer, has announced plans for the millennium celebrations which include having all its 2,000 managed outlets, and 1,500 leased pubs open, selling drinks at normal prices and not charging for admissions. Staff will be paid triple time and a share of takings.

**McDonald move**

The Channel 4 presenter Sheila McDonald is to be moved out of intensive care at University College Hospital London and into a rehabilitation centre to aid her recovery after being hit by a police van answering a 999 call. The 44-year-old suffered serious head injuries in the accident.

**Guinness death**

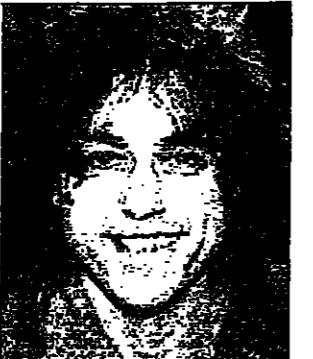
A member of the Guinness family died when she was thrown from her Roman caravans, an inquest was told. Rose Nugent, 31, niece of the late Lady Henrietta Guinness, struggled to regain control when the horse bolted near the family estate in Berkshire. Verdict: accidental death.

**Lunch**

THE TIMES THURSDAY MARCH 11 1999  
Print

# Geldof makes millions from Planet 24 sale

BY RAYMOND SNODDY  
MEDIA EDITOR



Time, a Carlton production company specialising in game shows.

Together the Carlton production houses will be spending more than £200 million a year making programmes for all of Britain's broadcasters, including digital television.

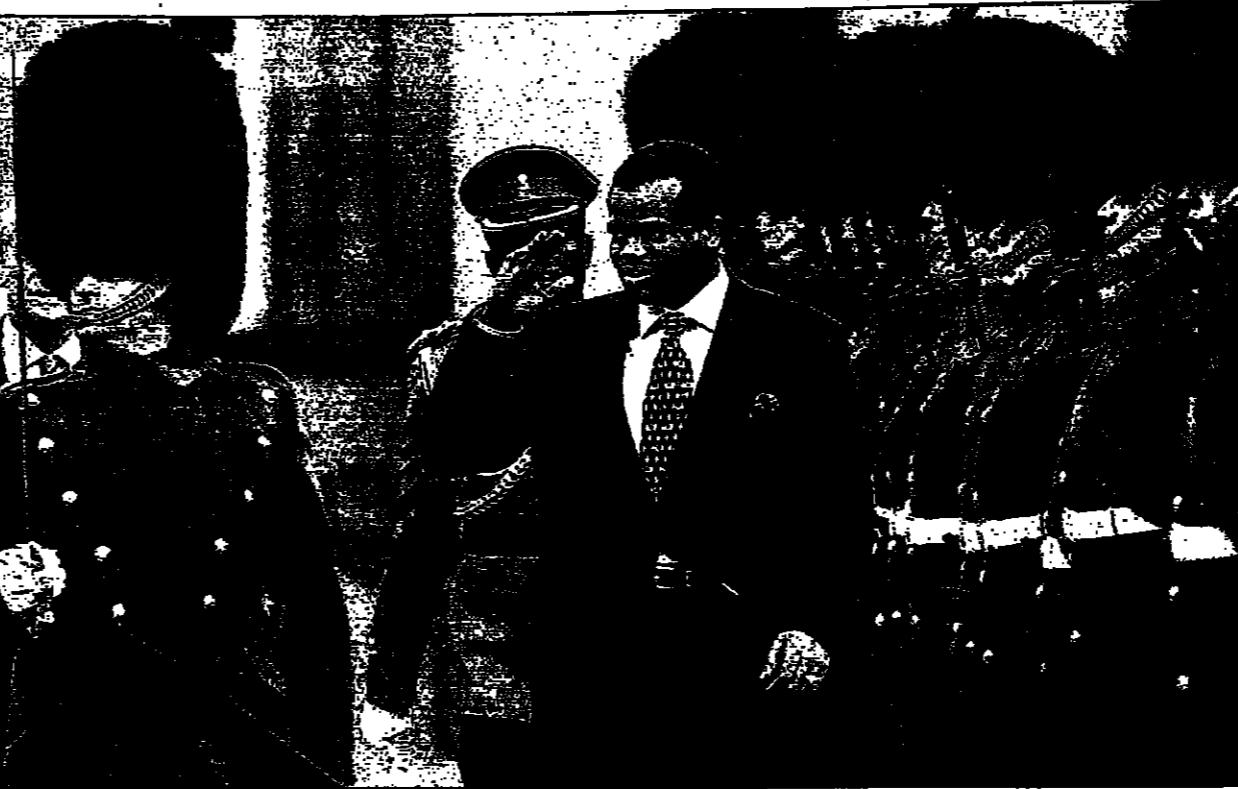
In buying Planet 24, which also makes *Watercolour Challenge* for Channel 4 and *Gaytime TV* for the BBC, Mr Green, 50, is tapping into the youth market. Planet 24 has nurtured popular talent such as Chris Evans, Lily Savage, Mark Lamarr and Gaby Roslin.

Mr Green, who was closely associated with the Conservatives under Baroness Thatcher, is through Lord Alli buying himself access to the thinking of new Labour.

Lord Alli said yesterday that, with the backing of "the largest player in ITV and the UK's leading commercial international sales business outside the BBC, the opportunities are boundless".

Mr Geldof, who organised the Band Aid concerts to raise money to relieve famine in Ethiopia, said yesterday that now Planet 24 had been sold he "intended to pursue a career as an astrophysicist". In fact Mr Geldof, who last month completed a three-month stint presenting an evening radio programme on the London station Xfm, part of the Capital Group, is more likely to chase radio investments around Europe.

Lord Alli, who is particularly close to new Labour, will join the board of Carlton Television in April and will take on the new role of managing director of Carlton Productions. The enlarged division will include not just the existing Carlton Productions but also Planet 24 and Action



The King of Swaziland greeted by a guard of honour at the palace yesterday. There was less ceremony at the House

## King of Swaziland amazed as two tribes go to war

**A**sked his view on Western civilisation, Mahatma Gandhi once replied: "I think it would be a good idea." The thought may have occurred to King Mswati III of Swaziland as he watched Prime Minister Tony Blair's speech yesterday – amazed at the savagery.

His Majesty, on a visit to Britain, graced the Distinguished Strangers' Gallery in magnificient scarlet tunic and brocade. Swaziland is a small, safe, stable country in Southern Africa, its constitution a blend of tribal tradition with democracy. Ceremony there is colourful but decorous: nobody is insulted; nobody gets hurt.

How different from our own tribe. The Commons hit new heights of pantomime – or plumb new depths of barbarism, depending upon whether you view the Chamber as a branch of theatre or of government.

At a luncheon in his honour the previous day at the Mansion House – and to the horror of the Lord Mayor – the

King had risen to what sounded like an impromptu tirade in the Swazi language from an unknown guest in a brown leather coat. But this was Swazi etiquette: royal persons should rise to a babble of praise. His Majesty will therefore have been less surprised than many visitors to witness something similar when our Prime Minister rose. Everyone started screaming.

The Swazi King will also have recognised a custom now ritually observed in King Tony's court. Every Labour backbencher asking Blair a question prefacing it with an extravagant verbal grovel. This is getting sillier than the silliest days of the premiership of the Great She-Elephant (the *Indlovukazi* title which the Swazis accord to their Queen Mother and which Sir Julian Critchley once borrowed for his own Party Leader).

"Can I say how welcome is the boost for business..." began Jonathan Shaw (Lab, Chatham & Aylesford). Could Phil Woolas (Lab) welcome the £15 million for schools in his constituency of Oldham & Saddleworth? He could. Was Blair "aware how warmly welcome in Scotland" was this week's Budget? He was after Jim Murphy (Lab, Eastwood) had told him. Labour's Gareth Thomas ("while welcoming... etc") had the cheek to mention massive oil spill off his constituency of Clwyd W. Our message: Gareth! King Tony does not wish to receive bad news.

But these primitive traditions were routine by comparison with the War Dance. William Hague rose to wild utilisation behind him. In a ritual chant he then asked the same question five times: would the Prime Minister say "what is

the total tax rise, in pounds..." this Government have overseen? To an answering cacophony from the Labour side, King Tony insisted, five times, that there was no rise, but a fall.

King Mswati looked astonished. Each side plainly thought its chief was winning. But the clash of testimony was never resolved. Or rather, it was resolved by a raft of unprecedented violence from King Tony about how good his tribe were and how bad were the Tories.

Maybe the House should create a new ceremony? When statistical deadlock is reached, Madam Speaker should strike a traditional African skin drum (gift of Swaziland) and a figure of majestic authority in such matters, such as Peter Riddell, should be carried in by bearers to adjudicate. Happily I understand that Mr Riddell briefly lowers his bifocals to dispose of this clash, *en passant*, in his column in *The Times* this morning. I hope King Mswati sees it.

## Maude breached anti-sleaze rules

BY MARK INGLEFIELD  
POLITICAL REPORTER

FRANCIS MAUDE, the Shadow Chancellor, was found to have broken the House of Commons anti-sleaze rules yesterday after an inquiry by the Parliamentary Committee on Standards and Privileges.

He had been reported to the committee for failing to declare an interest in a

debate he helped to initiate to oppose government plans to replace PEPs with individual savings accounts. Mr Maude is a director of the fund managers Garmore Shared Equity Trust.

He was also reported for adding his name to a Tory amendment to a finance Bill affecting tax on retail shops. It was claimed that he should have declared this as he receives £25,000 as a director of the supermarket chain Asda.

But although the standards committee found that Mr Maude had fallen "lou" of the rules, it claimed that this had been "unintentional" as his name had been added to the debate by another Tory MP.

Elizabeth Filkin, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, ruled that Mr Maude should have declared his interest in Garmore because of its links with a firm which was involved

in selling personal finance products.

But, she said, both breaches had arisen from the practice by the major parties of automatically adding the names of their frontbench spokesmen, in Government and Opposition, to relevant motions and amendments.

Ms Filkin suggested that, in future, party whips should check their speakers' personal financial interests before adding their names.

## Blair crony moves into the top slot at Carlton

BY CAROL MIDGLEY  
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT



His rise through the Establishment has been meteoric, particularly after the careers teacher at his South London comprehensive advised him to become a bus conductor.

In 1992 he met Mr Parsons, the highly creative force behind programmes such as *Network 7*, who had just teamed up with Bob Geldof at Planet 24 with the aim of pioneering the "laddish" programmes of the 1990s such as *The Big Breakfast* and *The Word*.

He and Mr Parsons became an item and are now one of the most fashionable couples in the country, the very symbols of new Britain.

Last year a party was staged at their Kent mansion for Mr Parsons's 40th birthday. There were peacocks on the lawn and dodgem cars and waltzers in the grounds with guests ranging from Peter Mandelson, one of Lord Alli's closest friends, to *EastEnders* actor Ross Kemp and Vanessa Feltz.

Lord Alli, who lives with his

partner Charlie Parsons, was made the youngest life peer after the general election – a reward for his unstinting support and financial donations to New Labour.

He is a colourful, diminutive figure, famous for his immaculate three-piece suits and his Jaguar car driven by a traditional English chauffeur.

## Condon unease at racism curbs Civil servant stopped 40 times

BY STEWART TENDLER  
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

SIR PAUL CONDON yesterday dismissed two of the principal legal reforms proposed by the Stephen Lawrence inquiry and cast doubt on the third. The Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police told MPs that the proposals for a law against racist language and behaviour in private would be unworkable.

Any legislation would go against the spirit of the European Convention on Hu-

man Rights, and Britain was moving away from this type of law, he said while giving evidence to the Commons Select Committee on Home Affairs. He expected that the idea would be explored and then rejected as impractical.

Sir Paul said he was also "troubled" by the suggestion from Sir William Macpherson of Cluny, the inquiry chairman, that courts should abandon the legal principle that defendants cannot be re-tried on a charge for which they have been acquitted, even if there is new evidence. "It

seems to be going in the opposite direction from the sorts of protection we have sought around suspects."

Asked about proposals to bring the police into the scope of the Commission for Racial Equality, he said he would not resist the change, which is supported by the Government, but would point out some difficulties.

Sir Paul condemned the inquiry's accidental release of details of police informants, saying that it had given police an

enormous amount of work.

BY STEWART TENDLER  
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

A SENIOR black civil servant who advises ministers on race relations has been halted by police under stop and search powers more than 40 times. MPs were told yesterday.

The case of Trevor Hall was raised yesterday with Sir Paul Condon, commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, as he

gave evidence to the Commons select committee on home affairs on issues including police abuse of stop and search powers against black people.

In 17 years Mr Hall, now in his 50s, has been stopped on 44 occasions, 39 of which were by officers in London. His experience was once highlighted by a High Court judge during a lecture on race relations as

an example of the racism and ignorance within the criminal justice system. Mr Hall, a member of the Home Office's community relations unit, acts as a consultant giving specialist advice on community and race relations policy and training covering the police as well as the Home Office, the prisons and probation service.

Yesterday the Home Office said that some of the stops

were part of police operations round the City of London during terrorist alerts and all drivers were affected.

Asked about Mr Hall, who acted as a go-between for the Lawrence family and the commissioner earlier this year, Sir Paul said he had met him several times but he made no comment about the number of times the civil servant has been stopped.

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Grenfell: food for thought

THE TIMES THURSDAY MARCH 11 1999

# Prince sparks Falklands furore

THE Vice-President of Argentina accused the Prince of Wales of making "intolerable" comments about the Falkland Islanders' right to self-determination yesterday. Carlos Ruckauf, in an interview with local radio, said: "The islanders have no right to self-determination, as the Prince suggested, a typically British trap."

Some Argentinians were impressed by the Prince's reference to the Falkland Islands in a speech to an official banquet hosted by President Menem in Buenos Aires on Tuesday night. He said: "My hope is that the people of modern, democratic Argentina, with their passionate attachment to their national traditions, will in the future be able to live amicably alongside the people of another

modern, if rather smaller, democracy lying a few hundred miles off your coast — a people just as passionately attached to their traditions — and be able to do so in a spirit of mutual understanding and respect, so that neither will again need to feel any fear from, or hostility towards, the other."

"Such an understanding can only reinforce our own friendship. Today, so many old friendships between us are being rebuilt." He concluded by toasting the Argentine nation in Spanish and received warm applause.

But as the Prince spoke, 200 anti-

British demonstrators, some with banners proclaiming "Pirate Prince Go Home", battled with heavily armed police on the streets near by and burned the Union flag.

Señor Ruckauf belongs to a different faction of the Peronist Party to Señor Menem, and is frequently at odds with him. Last night, Guido di Tella, the Foreign Minister, issued a statement in an attempt to defuse the controversy. He said the message, delivered on the first day of the Prince's official visit, was directed at the islanders and not at Argentina.

The Prince had asked that Argenti-

na respect a small democracy a few hundred miles off its shores. "Not only does the Argentine constitution offer guarantees that should make their worries unwarranted, they are also given by Argentina's international behaviour, commitment to peace and democracy, and the close and friendly relations it has with its neighbours and the large Western democracies. The Prince's wish coincides fully with Argentina's wish".

The Prince's comments, while not specifically mentioning the Falklands, caused some astonishment in the islands. Lisa Riddell, managing editor of the local newspaper, *Pen-*

*guin News*, said: "We had not been expecting him to make any political references. It was a very tactful speech, but I think the people here will be delighted by what he said."

The Prince is due to arrive in the Falkland Islands on Saturday. "We were planning to welcome him warmly anyway, but now we will be even more enthusiastic," she said.

According to *La Nación*, Argentina's leading daily newspaper, the Prince's reference to the Falkland Islands had been a rebuff to Señor Menem, who had suggested resuming direct flights from Argentina to the islands. *Clarín*, another leading

daily, said that Foreign Ministry officials attending the banquet had looked uncomfortable during the speech and had "squirmed in their seats".

Senior British sources said that it would have been surprising if, during his visit, the Prince had not made some oblique reference to the Falklands issue. "We did not detect any hostility. When President Menem was in London last year, he too referred to the islands without naming them."

Chile confirmed yesterday that it is to stop flights to the Falkland Islands in protest over Britain's treatment of General Pinochet. In December the Chileans recognised Argentina's claims over the islands.

Simon Stevens



The Prince of Wales dancing with Zulemita Menem.

## Tango revival puts sex back on dance floor

BY RUTH GLEDHILL

IF RUMBA is the dance of love, then tango is without doubt the dance of illicit sex.

Banned in Britain until 1907 because it was considered too erotic, the national dance of Argentina was not accepted in the tea salons of London and Paris until 1912. By then, it had been toned down to suit the demands of Western propriety.

The more violent checks, suggestive hip thrusts, leghooks and foot swivels were removed.

Once it no longer looked like simulated sex on the dance floor, the fashion for tango teas took off. The dance developed into the staccato, competitive ballroom style that can still be seen on *Come Dancing* today.

A combination of Spanish dance, the Cuban *habanera* and the sexy Argentinian *milonga*, tango emerged from the ghettos of Buenos Aires at the end of the last century.

Recent West End tango

shows, such as *Tango Por Dos*, and Sally Potter's film, *The Tango Lesson*, have helped to spark a revival in Britain.

On the social scene, the dance is returning to its highly sexed Argentinian roots.

Once again, it features complex foot swivels, leg kicks and leghooks. The woman's head is moving from a position of arrogant extension out of the man's right arm to one of seductive promise, tucked beneath his chin, or on his right shoulder.

The most successful male tango dancers are those who radiate arrogance, and dominance. Violent actions designed to subdue a fiery female partner are at a premium.

But it takes two to tango. The woman has to learn a pose that suggests both promise and unavailability at the same time. To the fiery Argentinians, it is a pose that seems to come naturally.

CAMILLA PARKER BOWLES made an unannounced appearance at the Chloé fashion show in Paris yesterday. Not even Stella McCartney, the designer, knew that she was coming.

The Prince of Wales' companion slipped quietly into a front-row seat — or as quietly as possible in the presence of 500 photographers and 800 journalists.

She arrived with Lord Douro, a friend who has a seat on the board of Vendôme Luxury Group, which owns Chloé, and sat between him and another friend, Mounir Moufarrige, the Lebanese-French managing director of Chloé, who lives in London.

She was not accompanied by a Scotland Yard escort. "If only we'd known

she was coming," said a harassed public relations worker, "we could have arranged better security. It's a nightmare, what with having to provide cover for Sir Paul [McCartney] as well."

French security employees removed

journalists, including this one, who had the temerity to note down what she was wearing, mainly to while away the time while Marianne Faithfull, Mick Hucknall, Patsy Kensit, Anita Pallenberg and the rest of the audience awaited the arrival of Sir Paul, the designer's father. For the record, Mrs Parker Bowles was dressed in a navy skirt suit and

white top from Valentino, one of her favourite designers.

The fashion show appearance has become one of the PR ploys of the Nineties, obviously beneficial to the designers who are guaranteed blanket coverage in the world's press, but also of strategic use to the guests. Witness Demi Moore's appearance at every fashion show a few seasons ago in her campaign to win a film role as *Coco Chanel*; Woody Allen and Soon-Yi at Armani, when Allen was seeking to rehabilitate himself with the press, and Minnie Driver at the Halston Show in

the run up to last year's Oscars. Mounir Moufarrige maintained that Mrs Parker Bowles "does wear quite a lot of Chloé". Hard to credit, frankly, given the skinny trousers and peacock-crocheted lace shirts tied at the waist that McCartney sent out to a rock'n'roll soundtrack.

Each season McCartney's cut and fit improves. This was a collection packed with items to put on a shopping list. Everything, including the evening wear, was accessorised with chunky-heeled boots.

And which Chloé designs lurk in Mrs Parker Bowles's wardrobe? "Er, she's carrying one of our handbags," said Mr Moufarrige.

## Lunch club nears its last sitting

BY RUSSELL JENKINS  
NORTH WEST CORRESPONDENT

THEY once gathered in their hundreds to join the "bunfight" at the buffet before settling down to listen to politicians, professors and the occasional film star expounding on a vital issue of the day.

But the Manchester Luncheon Club may be killed off after 77 years by the modern business culture that demands a sandwich and a bottle of mineral water taken at

the desk. Ann Boulton, club president, said: "We have a long, proud tradition but this reflects the general tone of the modern city, whereby family members have been taken over by corporations or multinationals. People just do not have the time for long lunches."

The club was the idea of Sir Raymond Street, the town clerk, who wanted a place for workers to be sustained intellectually as well as nutritionally. "There used to be a running buffet, which came to be

known as the bunfight because people would come in pick up a plate and dig in," said Mrs Boulton.

Speakers included Hugh Gaitskill, Lady Astor, Ernest Rutherford, Heath Robinson, Joyce Grenfell, Anna Neagle and Bobby Charlton. More are booked for coming months, but then the club may go out with a bang. Mrs Boulton, 60, said that members were being asked to consider spending the club's bank balance on a splendid final lunch.

## Attacker mistook sex of victim

BY A CORRESPONDENT

A SEX attacker who mistakenly snatched a long-haired man off the street, believing him to be a woman, cannot be placed on the sex offenders' register because of a loop-hole in the law, a court ruled yesterday.

Stefan Cichosz, 22, was jailed for a year. He had abducted his 20-year-old victim in an underpass in central Scotland and had beaten him when he realised his error.

Stirling Sheriff Court was told that Cichosz, unemployed, stalked his target, then attacked when the victim was walking through an underpass. Placing his arm around the man's neck and holding

what he said was a knife to his back, he forced him to a secluded riverside path, where he grabbed the back of his head and threw him to the ground.

Angry and frustrated after realising his mistake, he began throwing punches to the head and upper body, causing minor injuries. Cichosz, from Stirling, was later arrested and admitted assault and detaining the man against his will on January 3.

Karin Duffy, the Deputy Fiscal, said that, when Cichosz was interviewed by the police, it became clear he had launched the attack for sexual motives. "The complainant has long hair and, from the back, gave the appearance that he was

a woman. The accused told police he had had a lot to drink that evening," she said.

The Sheriff, Robert Younger, agreed with her that despite the original motive for the attack, Cichosz could not be placed on the sex offenders' register because the charges were not sexual.

Linda Smith, for the defence, said Cichosz was a first offender, single and living with his mother and father. "He had taken a quantity of vodka and had experiences in the past of a personality change when drinking spirits. This incident has come out of the blue," she said. "He has shown genuine remorse and lost his job and his girlfriend through this."

P R A D A

Former model lay dead for three months

BY ADAM FRESCO

A FORMER model has been found dead in her flat, where she had lain for up to three months. Neighbours claimed that, during that time, her drug-addicted "friends" continued to use her premises to inject heroin.

Lisa Edwards, 33, died around Christmas from a suspected overdose after her promising future was destroyed by heroin and crack cocaine. Her body was discovered on Tuesday in her flat in Dulwich, southeast London. Police are not treating the death as suspicious.

Miss Edwards, who had a daughter, is believed to have tried to break her drug habit several times and had attended a detoxification course.

Audrey Brown, a neighbour, said: "To think I have been living so close and without realising Lisa was dead next door. The last time I saw Lisa she told me she was going away for a while. That was not unusual so I didn't think anything was wrong."

Esther Parsons, 43, a mother of four who lives in the flat below, said: "I last saw Lisa around Christmas, but we thought we could still hear footsteps in her flat. Even my daughter has heard people up there."

"We have seen people going up the stairs and then heard footsteps inside the flat. I just assumed they were junkies going to use the flat to take drugs. It never crossed my mind there could be a dead person lying there at the same time."



Lisa Edwards: career destroyed by drugs

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# Why British shoppers get a raw deal

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

STEPHEN BYERS, the Trade and Industry Secretary, is right that shoppers in this country are paying more for consumer goods than people abroad.

We are being charged more for cars, groceries, clothes and CDs. At first the complaints were based on anecdotal evidence, but there have now been several investigations of

the huge price gaps. Now the Government is to do its own. Retailers will no longer be able to get away with overcharging.

A survey by Beuc, the Brussels-based consumer group, recently found that the this country was the most expensive in Europe for a range of goods it surveyed which included audio, video, and elec-

trical appliances, clothes and sports shoes. It found that car radios in London were 36 per cent more expensive than in Rome, and that stereo's 30 per cent dearer in London than in Aachen, Germany.

A study of car prices by the European Commission found that some cars can cost half as much again in this country than in continental countries, despite Britain being a fairly big manufacturer of cars.

A report soon to be published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is expected to show that the gaps have widened between prices since its last report in 1995 and that goods and services are the most expensive in the UK than most comparable countries. The last report found that UK shoppers paid 29 per cent more for cars and motorcycles and 31 per cent more for sports gear.

The arrival of the euro will heighten the consumer's feeling of injustice, as it will bring greater price transparency. The action by the Government to get tough on retailers comes as the Office of Fair

Trading is investigating car sales, supermarkets, private medicine and over-the-counter drugs. The car sales industry could even be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission after the Trade and Industry Select Committee berated the dealerships for anti-competitive actions.

Consumers may at last have friends in the right places.

But as retailers and others who stand accused of high charging will tell the Government, it is not a simple case of profiteering.

The action by the Government to get tough on retailers comes as the Office of Fair



Shopping in Boulogne may not be such a tempting prospect for British shoppers once high prices here are tackled

are higher than many of their international counterparts. This is as much a problem for British business as it is for the high-street shopper.

When McKinsey, the management consultants, produced a report for the Treasury on why Britain languished low in the ranks of international competitiveness and productivity, it highlighted the high cost of land and planning restrictions. Land is more expensive in this country because there is less of it than in the United States, France or Germany. Furthermore, the Government is not keen on more out-of-town shopping centres being built. This limits supermarkets' abilities to make economy-of-scale savings.

There are, of course, other blocks to cheap prices such as when one high-street retailer controls much of the market in one area. Or as in the case of car selling where ordinary customers are forced to subsidise cheap deals for the company fleet car buyers.

Energy costs are another obstacle. Big business users have consistently complained about high power costs in the electric

ity market. The market is now about to be abolished.

There are many problems and anomalies which force UK consumers to pay more than they need to for goods.

The Government has much work to do but shaming the culprits, followed by tougher powers which are being given to the OFT, may be a good start. The OFT has pursued high price setters in the past but its lack of teeth has meant many retailers have been able to merely say sorry and then do it all again. They will soon not be able to escape so easily.

## Prescott acts to cut water costs

BY VALERIE ELLIOTT  
WHITEHALL EDITOR

THE drive to cut water bills for households and industry is being led by John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister.

He has told Ian Byatt, head of Ofwat, the water regulator, that he believes the water companies have enough cash to cut bills by 10 per cent.

Mr Byatt is negotiating with the 26 water companies over their pricing regimes for the five years from April next year.

Mr Prescott is concerned that there is too much variation in prices for water for households in various parts of the country. He is particularly concerned that pensioners and poor families might be disadvantaged by a company's charging policy. There have been particular complaints in the southwest of England, which has a high level of pensioner households. Their average bill for water and sewerage is £125, compared with an average bill of £99 for customers of Thames Water Utilities.

Officials at the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions have started negotiations with the water industry chiefs. Mr



Water firms can afford bill cuts, says Prescott

Prescott is determined to find a way of breaking the monopoly of water companies supplying industry.

The main difficulty is that there is no equivalent national grid for water like that for electricity and gas, but one option being discussed is the possibility of companies in sites bordering two water company areas to be able to choose their supplier.

The same option is not being considered for households.

Officials have only just started work on the project and Mr Prescott is not expected to see a discussion paper for at least six months.

## Congestion may force flight curbs

BY ARTHUR LEATHLEY  
TRANSPORT  
CORRESPONDENT

RESTRICTIONS on the number of flights to Britain's busiest airports could be introduced to relieve airport congestion. John Prescott is to head an inquiry into airport competition that will examine whether landing slots are being shared fairly among airlines and if some traffic could be diverted from London.

The Deputy Prime Minister is concerned that too much reliance on airports around the capital is limiting the expansion of regional airports.

BAA, Britain's biggest airport operator, dismisses suggestions that its ownership of three London airports - Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted - encourages anti-competitive behaviour. It points to previous investigations by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission which have found no evidence that it has abused its dominant position.

However, Mr Prescott will be looking closely at ways in which big airlines such as British Airways have switched landing slots between the three airports.

The allocation of so-called



Airports: crowding is leading to hard choices

"grandfather slots" to airlines, which can keep them indefinitely as long as they are in use, has prompted claims of anti-competitive behaviour by smaller carriers. British Airways retains 40 per cent of Heathrow slots but can switch them to a new route if a rival moves into a fresh market.

Severe overcrowding at Heathrow has forced British Airways to make much greater use of Stansted and Gatwick. Some rival airlines fear the carrier could be securing short-haul slots at the two less congested airports in readiness for further expansion into the American market.

TODAY IN Section 2

Arts: Simon Rattle, *Alvin Ailey*, *James Williams*, *Patrick Adams* - page 36. Who has been hearing Shirley Kurwick? - page 36. Books: *Sean O'Casey* on *The Dubliners* - page 20. Peter Porter poems - page 41.

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# Inspectors accuse schools of racism

John O'Leary and Hannah Betts on a claim of institutional prejudice

MANY schools are institutionally racist, despite the best intentions of their teachers, inspectors said yesterday after criticising underachievement among ethnic-minority pupils.

The Office for Standards in Education expressed concern about the progress made by Pakistani, Bangladeshi, black Caribbean and Gypsy children. Although results were improving, boys in particular continued to lag behind other ethnic groups.

Launching the survey of 25 English local education authorities, Cliff Gould, Ofsted's head of secondary inspection, echoed the description of the Metropolitan Police in last month's report by Sir William Macpherson of Cluny on the murder of Stephen Lawrence. "I think the way that some commentators are defining institutional racism, certainly it would apply to many schools.

But it is equally important to recognise that the vast majority of teachers in our schools are not intentionally racist."

The inspectors found that many of the schools did not even know how their ethnic-minority pupils were faring compared with white pupils. Only half of secondary schools and one in 24 primary schools monitored achievement according to ethnic groupings.

The authors of the survey urged schools to do more to tackle the problems of prejudice and stereotyping. "If schools do not take a stand, what hope is there for breaking the vicious circle of these corrosive forces which exist in society at large?"

Equal opportunities policies had had limited impact. "Fewer than a quarter of the authorities had a clear strategy for raising the attainment of ethnic-minority groups and bare-



The survey found that boys, in particular, in some ethnic minorities continued to lag behind other ethnic groups

ly a third monitored that attainment. Bangladeshi and Pakistani children performed poorly in primary school, but did better as their English improved.

Black Caribbeans, by contrast, tended to start school well but become disillusioned even before the end of primary education. By the time they took GCSE, the survey said, their results were the worst of all the ethnic groups and they were by far the most likely to be excluded.

Gypsy children, who were included in the survey at the request of the Department for Education and Employment, registered by far the lowest re-

sults. Many opted out of education at an early age and, in half of the schools surveyed, no member of the group had sat a GCSE examination.

Jim Rose, Ofsted's head of primary inspection, said schools faced serious problems. "Which of us, never mind schools, has not felt guilty from time to time of unwitting prejudice? It is extraordinarily difficult to imagine that schools are not going to fall foul of this occasionally."

The comments did nothing to placate teachers' leaders, who insisted that their members were sensitive to issues of race. Nigel de Gruchy, general sec-

retary of the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers, said: "Accusing schools of institutional racism is outrageous and counterproductive. The report recognises that most schools are trying hard to catch the right policies in place and that the majority of teachers are not intentionally racist."

Charles Clarke, the Schools Standards Minister, also rejected the term. Speaking at a conference on ethnic-minority achievement, he said: "We have over 25,000 schools in Britain. With such a diverse system, I don't think that the phrase 'institutional racism' helps clarify either the overall situation or helps outline the appropriate courses of action to be followed."

## HOW ETHNIC GROUPS FARE

The Ofsted survey, which monitored schools in 25 education authorities in England, shows the strengths and weaknesses of the different groups and how boys fare compared with girls.

### Bangladeshi

The smallest of the main ethnic groups, Bangladeshis are also among the least likely to have been born in Britain. Language problems depress performance at primary level, where their results are causing concern. By GCSE, they have made up ground, but are less likely than other Asians to stay on in education and more likely to end up with manual jobs. Girls do slightly better than boys.

Percentage of population: 0.3  
GCSE (5 A\*-C) 1996: 25%  
GCSE (5 A\*-C) 1998: 33%  
School exclusions per 1,000 pupils: 9  
Percentage of 1998 higher education entrants: 0.6

### Caribbean

Of all the ethnic groups, black Caribbean pupils' results are causing most concern. After a generally good start at school, results fall away even before the end of primary education. They have the lowest scores at GCSE, by far, the highest exclusion rate and are the most likely to leave school at 16. Girls do better than boys except in maths and science.

Percentage of population: 0.9  
GCSE (5 A\*-C) 1996: 23%  
1998: 29%  
School exclusions per 1,000 pupils: 160  
Percentage of 1998 higher education entrants: 1.0

### Chinese

Chinese and other Asian groups from outside the Indian sub-continent are by far the most successful in educational terms. Although only 0.7 per cent of the UK population, they are well represented in selective schools and universities; more than 30 per cent staying in education after the age of 16. They are also the least likely to be excluded from school.

Percentage of population: 0.7  
GCSE (5 A\*-C) 1998: 51%  
School exclusions per 1,000 pupils: 5  
Percentage of 1998 higher education entrants: 2%

### Indian

More than a quarter of the ethnic-minority population is of Indian descent, and their members comfortably outscore their white counterparts in examinations. Those in education are more likely than other Asian groups to have been born in Britain, so do not face the same language problems. At least two thirds stay on in education after 16.

Percentage of population: 1.5  
GCSE (5 A\*-C) 1996: 54%  
1998: 59%  
School exclusions per 1,000 pupils: 22  
Percentage of 1998 higher education entrants: 4.0

### Pakistani

One of the largest ethnic-minority groups, with almost 1 per cent of the population, Pakistani pupils tend to do poorly in primary school, but catch up as their English improves. GCSE results have risen during the Nineties, but are still low by comparison with other groups. More than half — more boys than girls — stay in education beyond the age of 16 and university entry is growing.

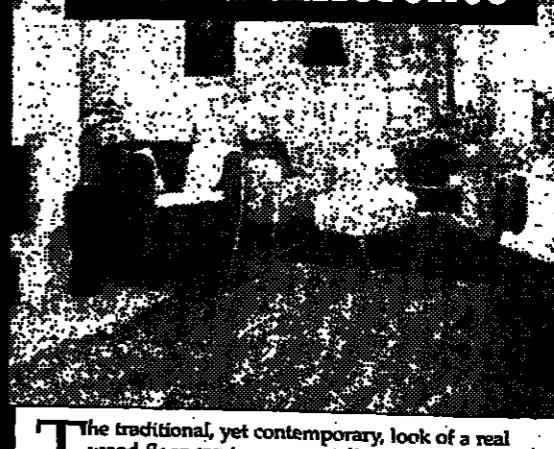
Percentage of population: 0.9  
GCSE (5 A\*-C) 1996: 23%  
1998: 29%  
School exclusions per 1,000 pupils: 35  
Percentage of 1998 higher education entrants: 2.2

### White

National averages for white pupils disguise enormous differences between social groups: working-class boys, for example, are as big a concern to ministers as any ethnic group. Even without such distinctions, white teenagers are more likely than blacks or Asians to leave school at the first opportunity. They are also marginally under-represented in higher education, compared with the main ethnic groups.

Percentage of population: 94.5  
GCSE (5 A\*-C) 1998: 47%  
School exclusions per 1,000 pupils: 28  
Percentage of 1998 higher education entrants: 89.8

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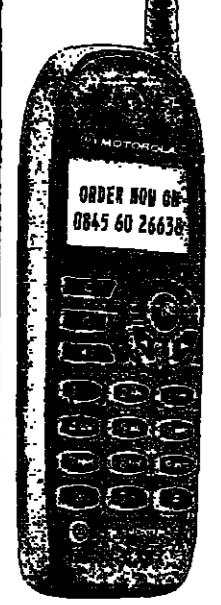
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# Hypnosis is last gasp for 700 smokers

**Richard Duce**, a 20-a-day man, joins a theatre full of people hoping to kick the habit for No Smoking Day

IF THE people who packed a theatre for a display of mass hypnosis are to be believed, 700 men and women gave up smoking yesterday.

Cigarette butts littered the pavement outside the New London theatre as hundreds of smokers took what they hoped would be their last nicotine fix while queuing to see the hypnotist Paul McKenna. They had tried everything else: nicotine patches, nicotine inhalers and plain willpower had all failed for the addicts who travelled from across London and the Home Counties after McKenna offered free mass hypnosis to coincide with National No Smoking Day.

All voiced similar reasons for another attempt to ditch the habit indulged in by 12 million people, of whom eight million would rather quit. Jenny O'Connell, a nurse with a 20-a-day habit, said: "It is for health and money reasons. They went up again in the

Budget. I am just sick of being a smoker, coughing in the morning and smelling of stale smoke."

Caroline Palmer, 28, admitted she rather fancied a man who had recently quit smoking 60 a day and was now a zealous convert. If she, too, could give up, perhaps she was in with a chance. "I'm really hoping it's going to work."

She was there with two friends from North London, Catherine Edwards, 29, a fitness instructor, and Catherine White, 26, who works in advertising. "If one us stops then I think we will all stop, but the real test will be when we are all together having a drink," Miss Palmer said.

All the people interviewed both before and after the show agreed to be contacted by *The Times* in the months to come to see if McKenna had aided their resolve to quit.

Inside the auditorium the hypnotist first asked people to get rid of their cigarettes if they were determined to quit. He was bombarded with a hundred or more half-filled packets.

Eventually he built up to the main event as he attempted to put the entire audience into a trance. They closed their eyes and, counting backwards from 300, listened to the soporific rhythm of his voice as he urged them to think how much better life would be if they gave up. Of course, if you still needed help, his stop-smoking cassette was on sale in the coffee shop.

After the event, organised



Kicking the habit: Maria Valkenborghs, left, Peta Darling, centre, and Gill Hicks were determined to give up and optimistic that McKenna might be the man to help them to do it



Kicking the habit: Maria Valkenborghs, left, Peta Darling, centre, and Gill Hicks were determined to give up and optimistic that McKenna might be the man to help them to do it



Kicking the habit: Maria Valkenborghs, left, Peta Darling, centre, and Gill Hicks were determined to give up and optimistic that McKenna might be the man to help them to do it

by Capital Radio, as the audience drifted home or back to work, no-one was going to be seen to light up. Those who stayed behind swapped experiences and said they now thought they could quit.

Maria Valkenborghs, 37, a product manager from Richmond, southwest London, said: "I feel good. I don't feel like a cigarette at the moment. I heard about this on the radio yesterday and took a day off to be here. I thought I had to give it a chance."

Gill Hicks, an image con-

sultant from Ealing, West London, who has smoked 20 a day for the past 23 years, said: "I feel very determined. I threw away my packet of cigarettes yesterday and have a patch on."

Peta Darling, a theatre worker, also from Ealing, said: "I feel that just some of the techniques he mentioned will help me to make a conscious effort to stop."

After a typical 30-plus minute journey through London traffic to *The Times* offices in Wapping, potential converts had fallen to 699 at least.

□ The first helpline aimed at helping pregnant women to give up smoking is to be set up later this year. Smoking while pregnant is known to be extremely harmful: the babies of women who smoke are smaller and less likely to survive than those of non-smokers.

Tessa Jowell, the Public Health Minister, announced the move during a visit to Quit, the national charity which helps people to stop smoking.

She said: "Smoking kills 120,000 people in Britain every

year. And every year, while it is killing 120,000 people, it is harming thousands of babies in the womb. That can't be right."

Ms Jowell said the aim was to provide an "intensive programme of counselling support, tailored directly to the needs of each individual". She added: "We want a service which reaches women early in their pregnancy, is accessible, flexible, and provides continued support throughout and beyond the pregnancy."

The Government-funded service is part of a strategy aimed at cutting the proportion of pregnant women who smoke from 23 per cent to 15 per cent by 2010, which will mean persuading 55,000 people to give up. It will be included as part of wider arrangements for a national smoking helpline. Funding will come from a £50 million public education package.

Experience from home and overseas suggests that providing pregnant women with this type of support can double their chances of quitting successfully."

cott acts to  
water costs

## Suicide in custody 'a voluntary decision'

By ELIZABETH JUDGE

THE girlfriend of a man who committed suicide in police custody was not entitled to £8,690 damages because it was his choice to kill himself, law lords were told yesterday.

Sheila Reeves was ineligible for compensation from the Metropolitan Police, David Pannick, QC, said, because Marin Lynch, who was facing deception charges, had committed "a voluntary act by a person of sound mind".

Mr Lynch hanged himself at Kentish Town police station in March 1990. He had already made one attempt to kill himself that day. Sir Paul Condon, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, was challenging a ruling by the Court of Appeal in November 1997 that the force should pay damages to Ms Reeves. The court ruled that the force had failed in its responsibility to take care of Mr Lynch by leaving open a flap in his cell door, on which he tied a knot as a ligature.

Nicholas Blake, QC, for Ms Reeves, pointed out that in 1968 the Home Office had instructed all police authorities that cell flaps should not be left open because of the suicide risk. The hearing continues.

## Accusers are liars, says war crime man

By A CORRESPONDENT

A RETIRED British Rail ticket collector denied murdering Jews during the Nazi occupation of his home town in Belarus, an Old Bailey jury was told yesterday.

Anthony Sawonius told police investigating war crimes: "No one can put a finger on me that I killed a Jew. The people who gave you that evidence are liars. The people over there will tell you anything for a couple of bob."

He said that people still living in Domachevo knew nothing about what went on during the Second World War. "They are liars. They want to destroy my life," he said.

Mr Sawonius, 77, of southeast London, denies four charges of murdering Jews while a member of a police unit in Domachevo in 1942. He is accused of collaborating with the Nazis and leading police squads to hunt down Jews trying to escape massacre.

He said when interviewed in 1994 that to be accused of killing Jews was idiotic. "I used to work for them. They gave me food. I could not go against those people."

The case resumes on Monday. (PA News)

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# 'As bad as it gets' in the NHS

Ian Murray reports on a nurse's despairing tale about the daily dilemmas caused by understaffing

THE time was 11pm, two hours after the nurse coming off the ward was supposed to have finished her shift. She sat down and wrote a letter to Christine Hancock, general secretary of the Royal College of Nursing, spelling out the dilemma of working for the NHS.

The staff nurse had been forced to choose which of her needy patients to give attention to. Two had just had operations: one had unstable blood pressure that needed constant monitoring in case of a stroke; the other had an unstable blood sugar level that threatened to plunge him into shock.

Another patient was in severe pain from a catheter. A confused patient kept trying to jump out of bed. "The other 13 patients were shouting for bottles, bedpans, pain relief—or just to talk."

Miss Hancock read the letter from the "tired and despairing" nurse to delegates at the college's annual conference in Harrogate yesterday. It illustrated how shortages of well-qualified staff were so acute that nurses had to ignore some seriously ill patients so that they could look after others, she said.

Having to choose between acutely ill patients equally deserving of a nurse's skills was as bad as the job could get, she said. "We know that the feel-

New performance indica-

tors were needed to highlight the importance of nursing care and to measure the "human touch". "We've got league tables for death rates, why not have them for the incidents of pressure sores, for pain management, nutritional standards, or the number of patients who say that their dis-

charge home was properly

planned? When we know how

important nurses are to quality patient care, when we know

more registered nurses mean

death rates are cut by 5 per

cent, why not publish information on staffing levels, the skill

mix of qualified and unqualified

nursing staff and staff

turnover?"

Care statistics alone were

not enough, Miss Hancock

said. "Many of our hospitals

are depressing, dirty, demoralising buildings long past their

sell-by date. Even if the build

ings are sound, inside you will

often find the paint is flaking,

windows are grimy and the

sheets haven't been changed.

"The environment of care is

not just about bricks and mor



Christine Hancock addressing Royal College of Nursing delegates yesterday on the dilemma created on the wards by a shortage of qualified staff

tar. It is about noise, equipment and patients' basic rights to privacy and dignity. It means an end to the humiliation of mixed-sex wards."

The congress, which earlier

this week reluctantly ap-

proved this year's 4.7 per cent

pay award for most nurses,

cheered her when she said that

higher wages were a long way

to halt declining standards.

Pay alone was not the whole

answer, however.

"There is something about

the culture of nursing that is al-

most shy about describing our

impact on patient care. We

can't afford to be shy any more.

The real healthcare chal-

lenge of the next century is realis-

ing the value of nursing."

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Care home 'negligent' over death

A care home that charges up to £1,800 a week was accused yesterday of gross negligence after a patient was found dead in a ditch. Alan Craze, the East Sussex Coroner, recorded a verdict of neglect after hearing how John Hanaphy, 41, a former postman, was able to wander off to his death. His body was found 12 days later in woodland near The Vine care home, run by Lilibra Health, in Crowborough, East Sussex. Staff had let standards of vigilance drop, the coroner said. "In my view there was gross negligence."

### Walker dies

An inexperienced walker has been found dead by a mountain rescue team in a part of Derbyshire's Peak District blanketed in waist-high snow. Police had been searching for Duc Thu Do, 38, from Leicester, since Sunday.

### Treasure returns

Scotland Yard will today hand back important antiquities to Egypt that had been smuggled out of the country by Jonathan Tokeley-Parry, a restorer who disguised them as trinkets. They include five tomb reliefs and 27 papyri.

### Family found

Amanda Sparrow, 20, and her children Stephanie, 3, Abigail, 2 and Sophie, 8 months, who vanished from Southampton on Friday, have been found in Blackdown. Sophie had been admitted to hospital with dehydration and hypothermia.

### Self-drive bus

A bus passenger who had slept past his stop drove off from a Birmingham depot in a double-decker whose engine had been left running, picking up a woman passenger on the way. He faced two criminal and two driving charges.

### Moth invasion

Hundreds of Indian meal moths that hatched in a packet of bird seed forced a couple to leave their home and have it fumigated. Peter and Christine Lightfoot, of Reading, spent a week in an hotel before returning home.

## Designer vouchers give young cyclists a head start



Nurse Ross Meeks backs the campaign for safer cycling

DESIGNER cycling helmets costing up to £60 will be available "on prescription" thanks to a campaign by the Royal College of Nursing to make them compulsory.

Under the scheme, to be launched in two weeks, cyclists will be able to collect a voucher from health centres and GPs' surgeries that will entitle them to a helmet with the prestigious Bell label at a cost of only £8.50.

The RCN campaign, backed at its annual congress in Harrogate yesterday, was inspired by a nurse in whose arms a 13-year-old boy died from head injuries he received in a cycling accident.

Angela Lee, a paediatric trauma nurse at the Royal Berkshire Hospital in Reading, "had gorgeous blond hair," said

Miss Lee, a paediatric trauma nurse at the Royal Berkshire Hospital in Reading. "There was no mark on him, but his brain was mush. We

nursed him for eight months, but in the end he died in my arms."

Three weeks later, a 14-year-old boy was taken to the hospital with a serious brain injury after a cycling accident. "I decided enough was enough and something had to be done," Miss Lee said. She founded the Bicycle Helmet Initiative Trust and set about gathering the facts to prove that helmets would save lives and prevent permanent brain damage.

The case of the 14-year-old boy highlighted the difficulties in getting children to wear helmets. "He was a street-wise, tough kid who thought if would

never happen to him, so he didn't wear a helmet," Miss Lee said. "Like so many children he thought only nerds wore helmets."

She found that children were happier to wear a helmet if it had a designer label. But these can cost from £40 to £60, compared with the unlabelled varieties, which sell for about £12.50.

Every year, 200 cyclists are killed and 4,500 seriously injured on Britain's roads. About 70 per cent of those killed and 50 per cent of those injured have head injuries. The campaign, Miss Lee started in Reading in 1993, has led to a trebling of the number of helmets worn

and a 45 per cent reduction in head injuries in the town.

The RCN has run into opposition to its campaign for compulsory helmets from cyclist organisations who claim that they would interfere with freedom of choice. They say that, in Australia, fewer people rode bicycles after all cyclists were forced by law to wear helmets.

Miss Lee said this fall proved only temporary and, since then, New Zealand, Iceland, 16 American states and two Canadian provinces had made helmets compulsory. The RCN will now lobby the Government to get Britain to follow their example.

The compulsory helmets scheme, a joint initiative between the RCN and the helmet manufacturer Bell, does not involve any public money.

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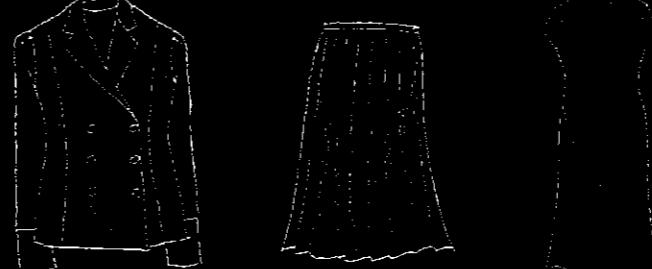
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THE TIMES THURSDAY MARCH 11 1999

HOME NEWS 9

# Urgent plan to stop London flooding

Disaster caused by rapidly rising water table could be averted with boreholes, reports Nick Nuttal

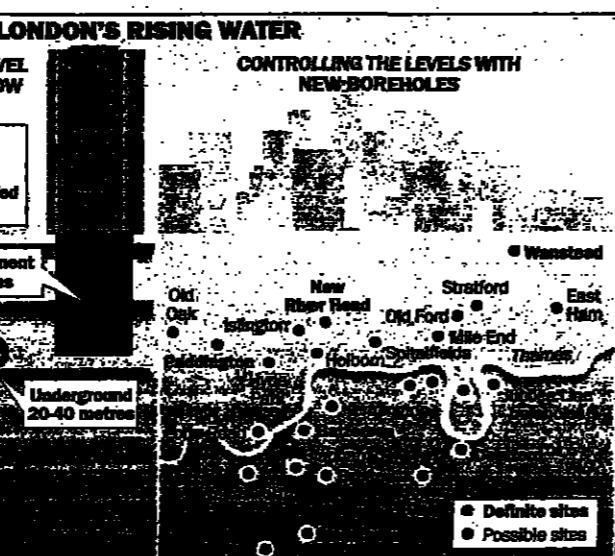
A NETWORK of 50 boreholes, able to siphon off billions of litres of water a year, to be drilled to save London's buildings and Underground network from flooding.

The scheme, drawn up by companies and organisations including Thames Water, the Environment Agency and the Association of British Insurers, follows alarm over rising groundwater levels under London since the loss of water-hungry industries such as brewing and engineering.

Experts fear that, unless urgent action is taken, buildings with deep foundations and basements, some underground car parks, telecommunications and electricity cables and parts of the Tube may become unstable in as little as five years.

The £10 million project could become a blueprint for other cities — including Birmingham, Manchester, Paris and Milan — where a rising water table is a threat.

John Sexton, of Thames Water, said the water table was rising by as much as three me-



tres a year. "It is time to act, not to delay, in five years we will have a real threat on our hands," he said.

A spokesman for London Underground said yesterday that the water table was 100 metres below Trafalgar Square in about 1905. In the 1950s it was recovering and stood at about 80m below Sir Edwin Landseer's lions. By 1995 it had climbed to about 50m below street level and it was now about 40m.

It has put the water table within reach of some of the deepest parts of the Underground network and deep foundations in the City of London, some of which are only 20m below the ground.

While the rate of recovery has slowed, the water table is still on course to return to its natural level of between 20 and zero metres below street level in areas of Westminster and the City by 2010.

The London Underground has spent £100 million in the past few years on securing parts of the network, including sections of the Bakerloo

line for London, will extract up to 70 million litres of water a day.

A third of the water, siphoned from the 50 boreholes to be developed during the next six years, will be used for drinking. However, some will be so salty that it is too costly to treat. Mr Sexton said they planned to discuss with landowners and councils ideas for reusing this water, including ornamental ponds and fountains, car washes and horticulture. Surplus water will be dispatched down the sewer system into rivers.

Thames Water has put up £8 million of the £10 million, but believes that other organisations and companies that stand to benefit should chip in.

The threat of the rising water level is already adding to construction costs. The new British Library has a 35m deep basement with reinforced walls to counter flooding.

Thames Water, which has put up £8 million of the £10 million, but believes that other organisations and companies that stand to benefit should chip in.

Experts fear that some buildings with deep foundations may "pop out of the ground" unless action is taken to lower the water table.

Mr Sexton said the scheme, to be unveiled next week at a conference organised by the City of London for business leaders and the government of-

such as escalators.

Bill Alexander, chief executive of Thames Water and chairman of the project's steering group, Gardit, said yesterday: "We have worked hard to develop this solution and are keen to see it implemented as soon as possible. There is no time to waste."

A spokesman for Birmingham City Council, where pumping has begun in some low-lying basements and cellars, said yesterday that they were carrying out studies with Severn Trent Water to see how easy it might be to siphon off the rising water table.



Parts of Malton were still flooded yesterday. The repair bill is likely to run into millions

A close call for Marina the water baby

BY PAUL WILKINSON

JANE HARTLEY'S baby will have a personal reason to recall the great floods of 1999. Her name, Marina, marks the day when the fast-rising waters almost cut her parents off from hospital as she was about to be born.

Marina's mother and her partner, Geoff Hutchinson, 44, had left their countryside home near Kirkbymoorside, on the edge of the North York Moors, en route for York District Hospital 25 miles away, early on Monday morning. But they soon realised the 40-minute journey was not going to be the usual simple run.

Mr Hutchinson, a stone-mason, said: "I knew the way round the back roads, so I thought we'd get through. But when they reached the town of Pickering, ten miles away, he realised the way was impassable.

By that time 33-year-old Miss Hartley's contractions were only five minutes apart. "She was lying on the back-seat uttering words of Anglo-Saxon origin," he said.

"Five minutes from Malton, Jane's contractions were only four minutes apart so we decided there was no way we were going to York." He diverted to the community hospital in Malton. "We arrived just after 7am and at 8.15am our baby daughter arrived."

Mother and Marina, who weighed in at 7lb 5oz, are both doing fine back at home in the village of Appleton-le-Moor.

The total number of homes flooded by the waters rose yesterday to more than 200. The cost of repairs to homes and businesses will run into tens of millions of pounds.

Malcolm Tarling, of the Association of British Insurers, said similar flooding which hit the East and South Midlands last April cost insurers £100 million. "The value of the damage in Ryedale could be between tens and hundreds of millions of pounds."

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# Ulster motorists queue to beat petrol tax rise

QUEUES formed at garages on the southern side of the Irish border yesterday as drivers travelled up to 40 miles to avoid the Budget increases on petrol and cigarettes.

Customs officials and petrol retailers called the 11.5 per cent increase a smugglers' charter. A record differential of 29p per litre for diesel and 21p for unleaded petrol has been created, giving drivers the chance to save £30 on a lorry and £9 on filling up an ordinary car.

Even before the Budget, so much fuel was being smuggled north that the Exchequer was losing at least £100 million a year in duty. Half the Province's stations were buying smuggled fuel, some of which was being ferried to England and Scotland.

Ray Holloway, the director of the Petrol Retailers' Association, said the problem was so severe that at least two big-name oil companies were considering pulling out of Northern Ireland.

He was "astounded" by Mr Brown's announcement, and accused the Treasury of ignoring strenuous representations from the industry. "All he did yesterday in the case of Northern Ireland's smugglers was give them another margin of up a litre. This will drive legal traders to buy illegal fuel simply to stay in business.

"If the choice is to lose your

## Cross-border drivers fill up at Irish garages, report Martin Fletcher and Audrey Magee

business or take the risk of buying cheap illegal fuel, what would you do?"

Customs and Excise has been fighting a losing battle to patrol the 300 miles of Britain's only land border. One senior source said: "We are already facing a severe problem and this is going to make it even worse."

In 1998, Customs officers seized 420,000 litres of smuggled fuel and obtained evidence of another 24 million litres that was not seized. But officials said that was only a tiny fraction of what got through, and the Northern Ireland Select Committee of the House of Commons has announced a full investigation.

The IRA is suspected of involvement in the smuggling operation. Some of the fuel is badly adulterated by chemicals used to remove dyes from agricultural diesel on which there is even less duty, and

many new vehicles have been damaged.

John Allen, a petrol station owner in Londonderry, said he knew of 11 stations within a five-mile radius that had gone out of business in the last 18 months. His sales had halved when Mr Brown raised fuel duties by 11.5 per cent in his 1998 Budget, and now the Chancellor had done the same again. He was surviving only on the profits from his shop.

"It's very bad news," he said.

Padraic Waters, who owns garages on both sides of the border, said that his station at Castleblayney, Co Monaghan, was cashing in. "Already we have people driving 30 to 40 miles from the north. There is a queue of about 100 yards of trucks outside the station."

John Kirk, who runs a petrol station four miles from the border with Newry, said his business increased yesterday by up to 15 per cent, all of it from Ulster. He said: "The northern people are very shrewd. They know where there is value."

Noel Murphy is considering closing some of his family's five garages in the north. The company is already losing 10,000 gallons of fuel sales each month to the Republic. "What use is a shop at a petrol station if you can't even sell fuel because it's cheaper a few miles away?"



Farewell toast: Julian Temperley pours a glass of the bottle-fermented farm cider

# Bubble bursts for sparkling cider drinkers

BY SIMON DE BRUXELLES, WEST OF ENGLAND CORRESPONDENT

JULIAN TEMPERLEY popped the cork on a bottle of his farmhouse cider yesterday and drank a farewell toast to the West Country's answer to champagne.

The Somerset farmer is one of a handful of producers still making bottle-fermented cider in the traditional way. But the death sentence of the cottage industry he helped to revive was hidden in the small-print of the Budget.

Overnight a drink that fuelled generations of farm workers but was still fit to grace the smartest of dinner parties has been killed off.

The duty on a bottle of Mr Temperley's dry sparkling cider has been increased from 45p a litre to £1.61. The increase applies to sparkling ciders and perries with wired-on corks and alcohol content above 7.5 per cent.

Every bottle Mr Temperley produces now attracts five times the duty of the carbonated cider mass-produced by companies such as Bulmer and Matthew Clarke.

The traditional drink is the indirect casualty of a war between the Italian sparkling wine industry and the manufacturers of a cheap imitation made in Liverpool. "Frascati" and "Lambini" may look Italian with their copycat labels and pictures of Venice, but they are made from concentrated imported pear juice on the banks of the River Mersey.

Because they do not use grapes the drinks have until now been taxed at the far lower rate applied to cider. After complaints by manufacturers of drinks such as Asti Spumante, the Government decided to put the squeeze on the copycat industry which is believed to have sold £30 million worth of its products last year.

The closure of this loophole has trapped Mr Temperley and the handful of other cider makers still using traditional methods. With its wired-on mushroom cork and dark green bottle, Burrow Hill is sold in Fortnum & Mason and raved about by drink writers.

Inside the farm's centuries-old cider house, wooden apple presses stand alongside vast oak vats each holding up to 10,000 gallons of fermenting juice. Most of the cider he produces will be sold in plastic gallon containers to callers at the small farm shop.

It is production of the far smaller quantities of bottle-fermented cider, made from single varieties of apples such as Kingsford Black and Stoke Red, that will now end. It costs £4.80 a bottle at the farm; £6.75 at Fortnum and Mason.

Although the increased tax will affect fewer than 10,000 bottles or 10 per cent of his total production, he said: "This is our flagship product. You could serve it at the table of any restaurant in the world."

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## Parental leave 'must be paid'

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

PLANS to give all employees three months' paid parental leave when they have a baby or adopt a child will be meaningless unless the time off is paid, unions said yesterday.

One in three workers who are parents believe they will not be able to afford to take advantage of parental leave if it means giving up pay for 12 weeks, a study by the Trades Union Congress shows. A further 12.5 per cent say they would not take parental leave even though they could afford to, because they fear their boss would not like it.

Just 15 per cent of workers say they intend to take up their full entitlement. Professional women are the most likely to use it and unskilled men the least likely.

John Monks, General Secretary of the TUC, said he hoped that the findings would help to stimulate a national debate about how the regulations for parental leave should be

framed. "Good employers already recognise that making parental leave paid is a key element in promoting family-friendly employment and encouraging staff loyalty," he said. Parental leave is set to be introduced in December when Britain adopts the social chapter.

It will guarantee parents three months off work and will be available to both mothers and fathers in addition to maternity and paternity leave.

Buttle lines are already being drawn up between the TUC's Paid Parental Leave Campaign, which has the support of childcare organisations, and the Confederation of British Industry, which believes that paid parental leave would put an "unsustainable cost on business".

Ministers are in a difficult position. There is now widespread acknowledgement that the long-hours culture is putting great pressure on family relationships.

## Rush to beat duty deadline

SOLICITORS were rushing yesterday to beat a deadline for increased stamp duty on the sale of high-priced properties (Robin Young writes).

The new rates of duty, 2.5 per cent on sales of more than £250,000 and 3.5 per cent on deals over £500,000, come into force on March 16. Where solicitors are able to exchange contracts and complete the transfer by that date the old rates will apply.

Those who exchanged on or before Budget day will pay the old rate, no matter how long it takes to complete. Giles Pemberton of the Knightsbridge solicitors, Pemberton's, said: "We certainly have clients for whom we are rushing to complete. 3.5 per cent on a sum over £500,000 is an appreciable sum to anybody."

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THE TIMES THURSDAY MARCH 11 1999

# British boxing fans take flight for big fight

BY ADAM FRESCO AND ELIZABETH JUDGE

THE biggest contingent of British boxing fans to travel abroad will start arriving in New York today to back Lennox Lewis as he battles to become the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world.

At least 8,000 fans, enough to fill 19 jumbo jets, will be making the trek to America hoping to see Lewis, the WBC champion, beat Evander Holyfield, the WBA and IBF title holder. More than 1,000 more fans are expected to turn up without tickets hoping to buy from touts at heavily inflated prices.

Tickets for the event at Madison Square Garden, which holds just under 20,000 people, are selling for up to six times their face value of about £60 to more than £900. The cheaper seats sold out within half an hour of going on sale.

A spokesman for boxing's most famous venue said: "We expect upwards of 8,000 British fans to be in The Garden on the night, making the atmosphere electric."

A spokesman for US Air-tours, which has arranged flights and tickets for 300 people, said there was unprecedented demand for a boxing match abroad involving a Brit-

on. He said: "Most of the air-lines have sold out for days. Many fans have said they are going without tickets, hoping to buy once out there."

They are travelling in the hope of seeing the first Briton to become the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world: since 1897, when Bob Fitzsimmons won the title. Since then 12 Britons have tried. The last was Frank Bruno in 1989; he was beaten by Mike Tyson.

Adam Cornwell, 25, who works for an IT recruitment firm in London, is going to see the fight with four friends, each spending £1,000 on

flights, tickets and accommodation. He said: "It is a lot of money, but it is a once-in-a-lifetime event. It is unlikely that I will get another chance to see a British heavyweight challenge for the title at Madison Square Garden, and the whole weekend will be brilliant."

Peter Stockton, 37, a commercial manager of a cable manufacturing company in Liverpool, is travelling with seven friends. He is missing the christening of his sister's baby to go to the fight, his first one abroad.

He is using savings for spending money while he is out there and confesses that he has lied to his wife about the cost of the fight ticket. He said: "She thinks it cost about £30. If she knew how much it really cost I wouldn't have to go all the way to New York for the big fight."

He had been expecting to stay in a small hotel or a youth hostel, but the travel company he booked with made a mistake and as a result it is paying for all of the group to stay in the Marriott Hotel in Times Square.

Lewis: hoping for lucky thirteenth attempt

Lynne Truss, and Lewis tipped, page 49

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# Terrified villagers surrender after Serb onslaught



Anthony Loyd reports from the deserted village of Ivaja in Kosovo, razed to the ground by troops bent on revenge



Ethnic Albanian refugees, including young and old people, make their way to the foot of the mountains near Kacanik after being driven from their homes by Serbian forces

**THERE** were only two men visible among the smouldering ruins of Ivaja yesterday. They were all that remained of the 500-strong ethnic Albanian population of the village, perched in the mountains 31 miles south of Pristina, after Serb tanks and mortars pulverised it a day earlier, before infantry moved in and set light to whatever remained.

One of the two, Ramadon Mujoqi, 84, sat dazed among the smoking devastation. His face bruised and puffed by repeated beating, he had fled his home when the Serb attack began. Separated from his family in the confusion, and

without enough strength to escape across the mountains alone, he returned to Ivaja late on Tuesday afternoon when the shelling had stopped.

The Serb soldiers beat me with their rifles, he said, holding out bloody and swollen fingers as behind him wild-eyed dogs devoured a horse, one of many animals slaughtered in the tank-churned streets. They asked me who I knew from the KLA (Kosovo Liberation Army). I said no one. What of my son? they asked. I said he wasn't in the KLA. So they beat me again.

The other man was anonymous in death. In his twenties, possibly KLA, he lay sprawled at the edge of the village, shot twice in the chest, palms open and fingers outstretched, a watch still ticking on his wrist. Two bullet casings lay by the pool of blood at his feet as well as a fresh cigarette end. So we know little of his death other than that he was a Serb soldier who smoked.

Mr Mujoqi did not know the corpse's identity either. But he said that he had seen him being beaten, then shot.

Ivaja was one of five Albanian villages hit by a co-ordinated Serb attack early this week that has displaced more than 4,000 refugees. Occupying the

greatest altitude of the five, nearly a mile above sea-level, and suffering the worst damage, it was once headquarters of a small KLA unit.

Ten days ago a Serb police captain was killed in an ambush outside Gjare, the next village down. Gjare was attacked immediately by the Serbs, its 350 civilians taking refuge in a ravine. Observers noted that it would need more than this token attack to quell the Serbs' anger at their loss.

The past few days have been a time of intense Western pressure on all participants in Kosovo's conflict. Their energies may have slowed the tread of

the Yugoslav state's vengeance, but when it came it was no less cruel, and its step was unfaltering.

The fighting started on Tuesday morning as Serb army and police units tried to clean the area of KLA, said Otto Bischof, a monitor with the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), who arrived to survey the devastation in Ivaja. You can see the operation was successful, he said sarcastically.

"There was no need to destroy all the houses with mortars. It was a job you could have done with infantry alone."

Eighty per cent of the village

was little more than rubble, any surviving houses destroyed by flame. The mosque had been raked with anti-aircraft fire and vandalised. Crucially the village's registration office, repository of the birth certificates and identity papers needed by Albanians to exist as Yugoslav citizens, had been ransacked. The village was silent.

Deprived of their homes, livelihood, and bureaucratic identity, 420 of Ivaja's people had been raked with anti-aircraft fire and vandalised. Crucially the village's registration office, repository of the birth certificates and identity papers needed by Albanians to exist as Yugoslav citizens, had been ransacked. The village was silent.

into police lorries for interrogation in Kacanik. Despite isolating their reputation with a pattern of atrocity and human rights abuses, Serb security forces operate with impunity, regardless of Western threats. Indeed, so far the Westerners in Kosovo, to date mainly OSCE monitors and staff representing the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), seem little more than waiters come to collect the bill. They are barely able to move at times, let alone fulfil their mission.

"We tried five different routes to reach Ivaja during the fighting," said a UNHCR officer, Paula Ghetini, as the organisation tried to arrange the evacuation of refugees in Kacanik, displaced by the same Serb offensive that destroyed Ivaja. "The Serbs blocked our access to each one. The populations of five villages, as many as 4,000 people, are trapped in the woods and mountains. They cannot escape and they cannot return home. Some have been on the move for the past three to four days, some for as long as two weeks. We can't even find them as we have such limited access."



## Milosevic told 'no immunity'

By MICHAEL EVANS  
DEFENCE EDITOR

PRESIDENT MILOSEVIC was offered no concessions yesterday when confronted by American envoys seeking to persuade the Yugoslav leader to sign a Kosovo peace settlement, US officials said.

Richard Holbrooke, the American envoy for the Balkans, and Christopher Hill,

the chief Kosovo mediator, began talks in Belgrade with Mr Milosevic less than a week before peace negotiations resume in France.

Although there was no apparent breakthrough after the first session, US officials emphasised that "no carrots" were being offered to Mr Milosevic.

There was no question, they said, of offering him immuni-

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FROM NIGEL GLASS  
IN VIENNA

THE founder and sole member of the Bavarian Liberation Army was committed to a mental institution for life yesterday by the criminal court in Graz, Austria, on charges that included the murder of four gypsies. Passing sentence on Franz Fuchs, 49, Judge Heinz Fuhrmann cited the racial nature of the crimes.

All of the attacks, which started in 1993, were made with boobytrap or letter bombs. The most serious attack was with a bomb planted near the home of gypsies in Burgenland. The bomb detonated when the residents tried to remove an anti-gypsy message. The blast killed four men.

Other victims included a policeman, who lost both hands while attempting to scan a letter bomb, and a refuse worker who suffered the same fate when he touched a booby-trapped package that had been left outside a Vienna school for foreign students.

All the bombs were aimed directly at foreigners or minority groups or at those who supported their integration into Austrian society, including the former Mayor of Vienna, Helmut Zilk, who lost part of a hand.

Fuchs lost both lower arms when he set off a bomb he was carrying at the time of his arrest, in what appears to have been an attempt at suicide.

The trial provided a macabre spectacle as Fuchs, who had adopted a Hitler moustache and haircut, repeatedly broke into anti-foreigner rhetoric including "blood of foreigners", while waving his truncated limbs within the sleeves of his pullover. His outbursts resulted in his removal to the cells for a large part of the trial.

The court rejected the defence's contention that Fuchs acted as part of a wider group. The prosecution produced forensic science and other evidence to show that the explosive devices were linked to Fuchs personally.



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Onassis fortune

FROM JOHN CARR IN ATHENS

A FORTUNE conservatively estimated at £500 million - what remains of the legendary Onassis shipping fortune - is in the hands of auditors after Swiss authorities ruled that its Greek administrators could no longer control the account.

The heiress to the money is Athena Rousset, the 14-year-old grand-daughter of the late Aristotle Onassis. According to a local Swiss guardianship authority, she has "a conflict of interest" with the Athens-based Onassis Foundation that had the task of administering the fortune.

In reaching its decision, the Upper Engadine Guardianship Authority, a non-judicial body, faulted the foundation for hiring agents to spy on Athena and her French father, Thierry Rousset, at their Swiss home last year. It cited a statement by Athena saying she "does not want to have any relationship with the Greek members of the board".

Fuchs lost both lower arms when he set off a bomb he was carrying at the time of his arrest, in what appears to have been an attempt at suicide.

The trial provided a macabre spectacle as Fuchs, who had adopted a Hitler moustache and haircut, repeatedly broke into anti-foreigner rhetoric including "blood of foreigners", while waving his truncated limbs within the sleeves of his pullover. His outbursts resulted in his removal to the cells for a large part of the trial.

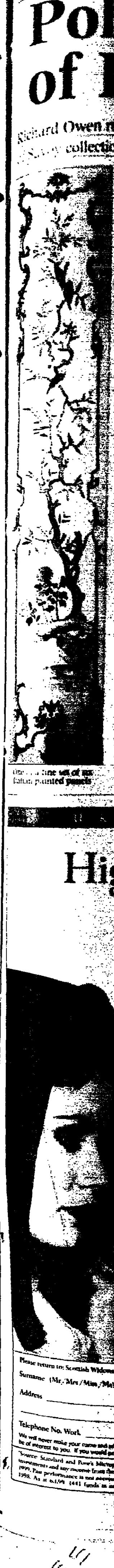
The court rejected the defence's contention that Fuchs acted as part of a wider group. The prosecution produced forensic science and other evidence to show that the explosive devices were linked to Fuchs personally.



Papadimitriou: fuming  
at decision by the Swiss

court that M. Rousset was raising Athena in ways that would lead her to forget her Greek roots, the foundation hired agents to spy on the Swiss household. The attempt backfired when several people were arrested.

The Onassis fortune is now in the hands of KPMG Fides, a Lučenec-based auditing company. Mr Papadimitriou said that in one respect he was satisfied that M. Rousset was excluded from any role in administering the fortune. He added that in her will, drawn up shortly before her death in 1988, Christina Onassis had stipulated that M. Rousset should be excluded from any part in administering the Onassis family fortune.





# China tightens grip on Tibet

Communists still fear revolt 40 years after flight of the Dalai Lama, reports James Pringle from Beijing

WITH China's huge military garrison in Tibet on full alert yesterday, the fortieth anniversary of the bloody uprising that led to the Dalai Lama's flight into exile, the Tibetan spiritual leader said in India that Beijing had intensified the repression of his people and would not hold talks.

"A lack of political will and courage on the part of the Chinese leadership has resulted in their failure to reciprocate my numerous overtures," the 14th Dalai Lama told 4,000 Tibetans in Dharamsala, site of his government-in-exile.

As troops in riot gear guarded Lhasa's streets, security police on rooftops around the central Jokhang Temple watched pilgrims, turning prayer-wheels and murmuring mantras, quietly marking national uprising day. This was the occasion on March 10, 1959, when battles began that left thousands of Tibetans dead and resulted in the god king fleeing over the Himalayan passes.

In Beijing, a senior Tibetan official, Raidi, used the strident language of the Cultural Revolution to abuse the Dalai Lama: he was a "splitter" and a "loyal tool used by anti-China forces".

The People's Daily said that Tibetan society before Chinese intervention "was darker and more cruel than Europe's system of serfdom in the Middle Ages". The Communist Party newspaper added: "It can be said to have been one of the world's most serious violators

of human rights. One Western diplomat in Beijing said: "Seldom has the outlook for the return of the Dalai Lama and the survival of Tibetan culture looked so bleak."

Indirect communication with Beijing broke down late last year at the same time as China's leaders, afraid of social unrest because of widespread job losses in the state sector, cracked down on Chinese political dissidents.

President Jiang Zemin had surprised critics last June dur-

ing a visit to Beijing by President Clinton by offering talks with the Dalai Lama on condition that he recognised Tibet and Taiwan as parts of China.

The Dalai Lama, the 1989 Nobel Peace laureate, said yesterday that he had requested a meeting with Beijing before responding to President Jiang's comments but was snubbed.

Observers note that he always speaks of autonomy, not independence, for Tibet, and advocates non-violence.

In Beijing an important

exhibition shows the alleged benefits that the Tibetans have enjoyed since Chinese troops invaded the territory in 1950, and the official press is full of articles praising Communist Party rule in Tibet, without mentioning the destruction visited on Tibetan monasteries and religion during the Cultural Revolution.

When the Dalai Lama left with 30,000 followers for Dharamsala, a former British hill station, it was only to be a brief exile they thought.

But 40 years on, the Dalai Lama remains in exile, looking ever less likely to return to his winter residence at the Potala, and to the 2.5 million Tibetans in what is now the Tibet Autonomous Region.

Yet if the 63-year-old spiritual leader did return he would scarcely recognise Lhasa, the capital, which, with the exception of an enclave around the Jokhang, looks like any other drab Chinese city.

He has described what is happening as "some kind of cultural genocide".

About 100,000 ethnic Chinese have poured into Lhasa looking for a better life. For the first time, Lhasa has traffic jams as well as lurid advertising hoardings, tacky high-rise blocks and pollution.

The Chinese authorities control Lama Buddhism rigidly and crush any opposition. According to human rights groups, monks and nuns who shout slogans in praise of the Dalai Lama or independence are tortured.

In Beijing an important



The Dalai Lama at a ceremony in Dharamsala yesterday commemorating the revolt



Annie Lennox and a Tibetan torture victim in London

## Hollywood crusaders join protest

FROM GILES WHITTELL  
IN LOS ANGELES

TWELVE time zones from California, and travelling without the perquisites of stardom, Richard Gere and Goldie Hawn lent star power if not political clout to the gathering of Tibetan exiles in northern India. Mr Gere, a practising Buddhist and friend of the Dalai Lama, has become a regular visitor to Dharamsala on the anniversaries of the 1959 Tibetan uprising, not least because he is barred from Tibet itself. "The human

rights situation is getting worse," the actor told one reporter. "The Chinese are carrying out a systematic genocide."

Such outspokenness has not endeared him to Beijing, which banned him from Tibet when its flight became Hollywood's most fashionable foreign policy

crusade with the release of two major films two years ago. Harrison Ford and his wife, as well as Steven Seagal (who claims to be a reincarnation of a holy Tibetan icon), were among those denied visas to the remote country as Hollywood's interest rose to fever pitch with the making of *Seven Years in Tibet*, starring Brad Pitt, and Gere's *Red Corner*.

Ms Hawn, mingling at the gathering with Tibetans who had made the trans-Himalayan trek, said: "It breaks my heart that these gentle people have been the object of abuse."

## WORLD IN BRIEF

### Libyans guilty of French bombing

Paris: Six Libyan intelligence agents, including the brother-in-law of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, the Libyan leader, were sentenced in absentia to life imprisonment (Susan Bell writes). A French anti-terrorism court found them guilty of the 1989 bombing of a French aircraft in which all 170 people on board, including four Britons, died.

France has issued international arrest warrants and will apply to Libya to impose the verdict on the six men — or face reinforced sanctions. The trial came as Colonel Gaddafi seemed set to hand over two Libyans to face charges in Europe in connection with the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am airliner over Lockerbie in Scotland in which 270 people died.

### TV plea to Redgrave

Los Angeles: The estranged husband of Lynn Redgrave, the British-born actress, has made a television appeal for her to drop divorce proceedings and continue their 32-year marriage. "Look, I'm 66 years old. You [Redgrave] were 56 years old just yesterday, and I just think we're a little old for all this nonsense," John Clark, a director, said in a television interview. "So please, I love you. Settle down and lighten up." Ms Redgrave filed for divorce on March 1. (Reuters)

### Antigua re-elects PM

St John's, Antigua: Car horns blared and supporters jumped for joy as Lester Bird, 61, whose party has dominated Antiguan politics for decades, won a convincing election victory and was returned as Prime Minister — despite charges of corruption. Mr Bird's Antigua Labour Party won 12 of 17 parliamentary seats in Tuesday's election, one more seat than it held in the previous Government. (AP)

### Lusaka reporters held

Harare: Four Zambian journalists were arrested, a fifth is on the run and a sixth was refusing to allow police to enter his home as President Chiluba's Government cracked down on "unpatriotic" press (Jan Raath writes). All are reporters on the independent daily Post, which said that Zambia's ill-equipped army of 20,000 could be easily crushed by a 10,000-strong division from neighbouring Angola.

### Meteorite from Mars

Scientists have identified a new meteorite from Mars after an anonymous donor handed it to a museum in Italy (Nicholas Booth writes). It is the fourteenth known fragment of the Red Planet to be identified after landing on Earth. The sample, the size of a coconut and weighing about 5lb, was found in the Libyan Desert near Dar al Gami in the Sahara.

### Back to the USSR

Moscow: Russia's Communist and nationalist-dominated parliament voted overwhelmingly to reintroduce the Soviet anthem — but without lyrics. The provisional anthem will stay wordless while poets struggle to find the sentiments to fit the melody. Bringing back the Soviet-era tune would have to be approved by President Yeltsin, seen as unlikely. (AFP)

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THE TIMES THURSDAY MARCH 11 1999



President Clinton listens to a speech by President Flores of Honduras during a tour of areas affected by Hurricane Mitch last year

PAUL RICHARDS / AFP

## Clinton's visit fails to build bridges in Central America

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN MIAMI

NEARING the end of a four-day trip to Central America, President Clinton's efforts to paint the US role in the region as a humanitarian light threatened to come unstuck yesterday when local leaders raised complaints over Washington's policy of deporting illegal immigrants.

Mr Clinton has been at pains to draw a distinction between the US military involvement in Central America's bloody civil wars in the 1980s and the post-Hurricane Mitch relief effort in which American soldiers have flown food and medicines to the needy and helped to rebuild bridges and roads.

In a speech to American soldiers in Honduras, Mr Clinton said they were metaphorically building new bridges of

understanding between the US and Central America. "You have shown the people of Central America the true colours of our men and women in uniform," he said.

It is a point that US officials in Mr Clinton's delegation seem anxious to emphasise. "Clearly there have been apprehensions in the past about the US military," said Michael Hammer, a spokesman for the President's National Security Council. "But the way we responded immediately through our military to provide assistance (after Mitch) has cast a new light on the US military, a positive light."

But the murky American role in the past is proving less easy to wipe away. In Guatemala, where Mr Clinton

spent yesterday, an official Truth Commission published a report two weeks ago into the conduct of the war there. It concluded that the US gave money and training to the Guatemalan military which committed "acts of genocide" against the country's indigenous Mayan Indians.

Mr Clinton found that any goodwill the US has earned more recently is being undermined by a policy of deporting illegal Central American immigrants that local leaders say is fueling the region's economic crisis. After Hurricane Mitch the Clinton Administration agreed to halt deportations. But the moratorium — still in effect for those from Nicaragua and Honduras — is set to end for those from El Salvador and Guatemala.

CARTOONISTS & WRITERS SYNDICATE



## Smoking cowboy packs it in

FROM GILES WHITTELL  
IN LOS ANGELES

HE WAS six storeys tall, towering over Sunset Boulevard with the mystique of an outsider and the confidence of a man who appears to know his own desires. Now the world's most famous Marlboro Man is gone, outlawed by a clause in the \$206 billion (\$126 billion) settlement between tobacco firms and state governments that requires all cigarette billboards in America to come down by April 23.

For many, this red-shirted cowboy beside the Chateau Marmont hotel where John Belushi died of an overdose transcended advertising. A 1991 *Los Angeles Times* art review described it as "a more enduring urban monument than almost any other building in Los Angeles".

But a crew arrived on Tuesday morning to prove once again that only impermanence is permanent in this place of lifestyle. One onlooker called the sign an institution and its passing "a real shame".

## Friends shocked by charges

BY DAMIAN WHITWORTH

THE scientific community at the supposedly top-secret, high-security nuclear weapons research laboratory at Los Alamos is reeling after the disclosure of a quiet, friendly colleague who is suspected of being the Chinese spy at the centre of the biggest espionage scandal in years.

Mr Lee, who was at the centre of the China fundraising row and was criticised over a meeting he held with Li Peng, who as Prime Minister had ordered the Tiananmen Square crackdown, also defended the "constructive engagement" policy towards China that Steve Forbes, the Republican presidential candidate, this week called "appeasement".

The spy row comes as the White House prepares for a visit next month by the Zhu Rongji, the Chinese Prime Minister, amid tension over the targeting of Chinese missiles at Taiwan.

the Rockies in New Mexico and were his neighbours in the suburban community that has sprouted near by, said they were bewildered that he should have been fingered as the guilty man and cast out.

Mr Lee, in his late fifties, is understood to have been at Los Alamos since 1978 and in the 1980s began looking at nuclear weapon design and in particular how thermonuclear bombs are triggered. His alleged involvement in spying was reportedly traced to his trip to China in the late 1980s.

good actor, or he is not your man," he said. Others said he was well-liked and should have been given a full hearing before he was dismissed.

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Dr Thomas Stuttaford reports on babies and jaundice; a new comb that kills lice; James Major and postural hypotension; transient ischaemic attacks (TIAs); and conditions that affect driving ability

## Spotting the danger of jaundice

When a baby is developing in the womb, bilirubin, the bile pigment, crosses the placental barrier and an all-providing mother excretes them. A healthy newborn is pink — or bright red — but within a day or two many show signs of jaundice.

In most cases this physiological jaundice merely gives babies a healthy look, more like a tan than a yellow hue. Once a baby has to bathe with the world on its own, it has to excrete its own bilirubin, and if the system is late in clocking in, the bilirubin then starts to accumulate.

Premature babies are much more likely to be jaundiced than those who are delivered at term, but whatever the cause a close check is kept on it and the doctors make certain that it never reaches a point where damage is done to the child. Physiological jaundice clears more quickly if the baby is feeding well and kept well hydrated.

Physiological, normal, jaundice starts to show after two or three days and has usually disappeared by the time the child is a week old, although tests may show that the blood's bilirubin level is still raised until the tenth day. Fortunately it is usually mild, the baby is not unwell and does not stop feeding. Jaundice in the first two days, or persisting after the tenth day, always needs special investigation.

There are various causes of jaundice that show almost immediately after birth, including incompatibility between the mother's and the child's blood, unusual fragility of a baby's red blood cells, and

sometimes an infection may cause early jaundice.

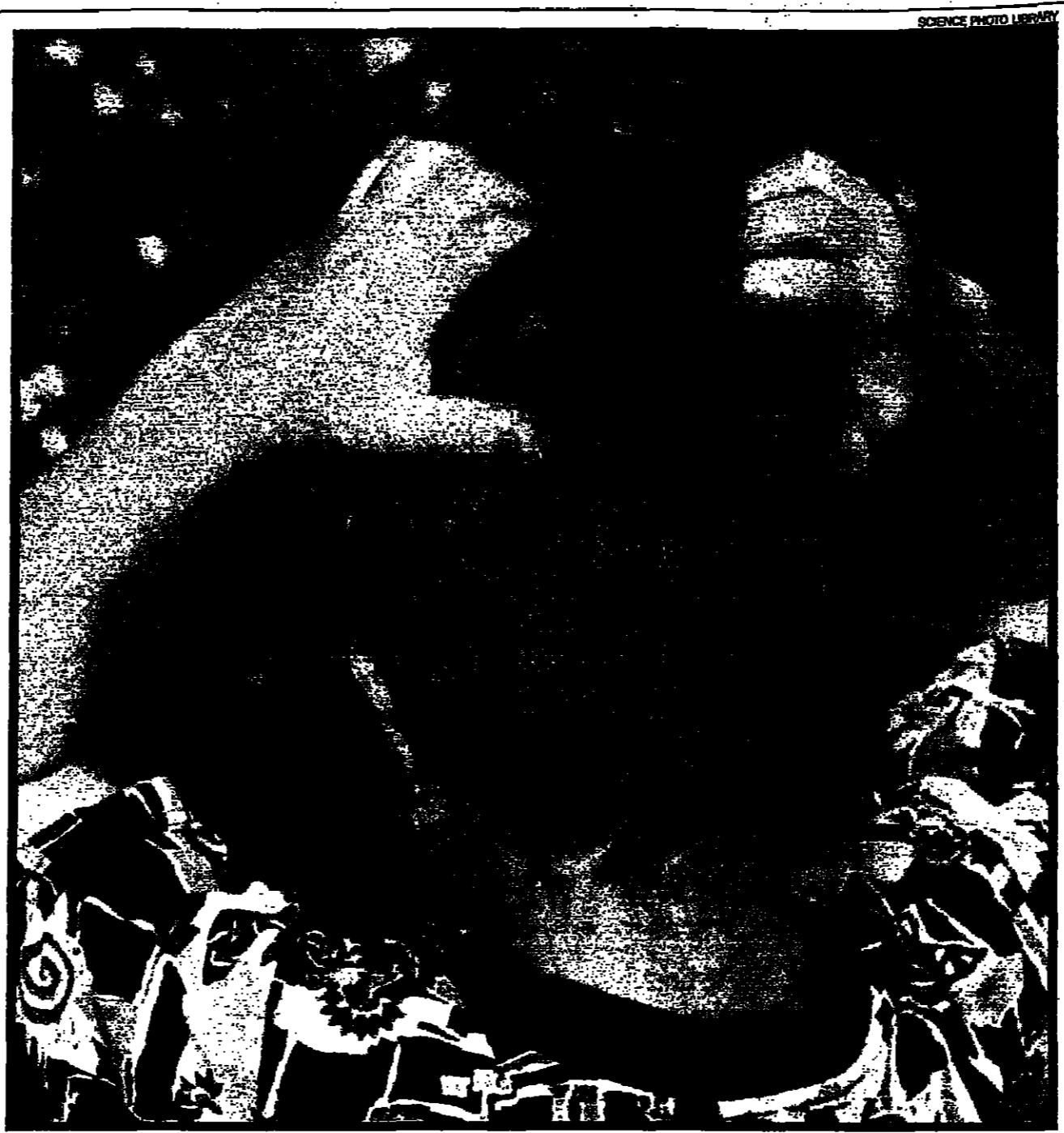
The causes of neo-natal jaundice, which comes on between the second and fifth day, at the same time as the physiological type, include various metabolic diseases in the mother and infections in the baby, especially those of the urinary and bile tracts.

Late onset, persistent jaundice, from ten to 14 days, is not always the result of breastfeeding, as is too often asserted, albeit that breast-fed babies tend to remain jaundiced for a longer period. Above all else, biliary atresia and an underactive thyroid are two very important causes of persistent jaundice which need early diagnosis and treatment. If an underactive thyroid, hypothyroidism is not diagnosed and treated within a fortnight or so, the chances of a complete recovery and normal development are significantly reduced.

Likewise, biliary atresia, in which the bile ducts both inside and outside the liver become progressively blocked as the result of an inflammatory process, needs urgent surgical treatment. Surgery before eight weeks is essential if the baby is to have the best chance of a successful operation. If the bile drainage is not established, liver function slowly deteriorates and then the child's only hope of long-term survival is a liver transplant.

The Children's Liver Disease Foundation has drawn attention to the difference in outcome between this life-saving operation — the Kasai-portoenterostomy, which

If jaundice persists after ten days it must be acted on'



Itchy scalp: every school term sees a series of outbreaks of lice. The insects are easily spread through shared brushes

Can't get rid of hair lice? Fry them

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY and its medical entomology centre in particular, has always been in the forefront of the battle against lice.

Recently the centre produced a paper on laboratory tests of the Robi Comb, a battery-powered comb that zaps the creatures by electrocuting or dehydrating them in an effective method of detection and control. The incidence of attacks waxes and wanes; during the Second World War they were very prevalent. The lice that affect human beings are of three different types — those that live on the head, the body or in the creases of clothes. The present scourge among children is head lice.

It is estimated that about four million people, not all of them children, catch them each year. The life span of a louse is only 40 days but it can lay many hundreds of eggs during that time. The eggs are attached to the base of hair shafts and are known as nits. The start of every school term sees a series of outbreaks as lice are easily spread by shared brushes or head-to-head contact in the playground. If the hair is fair, the lice are light in colour; in brunettes they are brown.

There are many chemicals that will poison lice but parents are concerned about their toxicity. The Robi Comb delivers an electrical charge from a 1.5-volt battery. No shock reaches the patient as every alternate tooth is covered by a resin, preventing a circuit from being set up with the scalp. As the comb is drawn through the hair, it buzzes, but the buzzing stops each time it comes into contact with a louse. The louse is brushed away, buzzing restarts and combing can then continue.

These drugs reduce the sensitivity of the sensors.

The only recreational drugs — if they can be called that — that increase the likelihood of postural hypotension are alcohol, which increases the tendency of blood to pool in the feet, and barbiturates, which dull the senses. Drugs with an amphetamine-type reaction, including Ecstasy and cocaine, reduce the tendency to this problem.

This vasodilatation is also enhanced if the person has a temperature, the room is very warm, or if they are overtired. All these conditions cause swelling in the lower extremities, even if the arterial sensors are working well. A heavy meal increases the circulation of the blood to the stomach at the expense of the rest of the body. This, too, increases the likelihood of sudden collapse upon standing up right.

What is the best treatment? Deal with any particular cause, such as heart disease or diabetes. If there is no such cause, increase the number of early nights, try not to wine and dine too abundantly and, if sitting in a warm restaurant, rise to your feet very slowly. If lying flat, it is as well to sit on the edge of the bed before standing up — a discovery made by many pregnant women, who are also likely to suffer from it.

## Tense time for James Major

James Major and the vicar of a parish within the remit of my former practice do not have much in common, other than a tendency to suffer from postural hypotension. Both, it seems, are likely to collapse if they stand up too quickly, particularly if they are tired and tense.

What would be an incident of no concern other than to their friends and family becomes a general talking point because, in different ways, both the vicar and the son of the former Prime Minister are public figures. My vicar's worry — he was a strait-laced man who only occasionally blew the dust off his shiny bottle before pouring a small glass for favoured parishioners after church — was that his flock might think he was drunk. It is well-known that postural hypotension, also known as orthostatic hypotension, is worse after drinking.

The blood pressure of sufferers falls dramatically when they rise to their feet. Their circulation is slow to respond to the increased demands of the upright posture.

This is because there is some impairment in the sensors in the arteries which stimulate the changes in the circulation that compensate for the upright position and enable the heart to keep the brain supplied with blood. Without an adequate blood supply to

the brain, a person collapses in a crumpled heap and may, occasionally, even have a seizure.

The condition is much more common in the overstressed and in those of middle age and beyond — people who are tired and tense.

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if sitting in a warm restaurant, rise to your feet very slowly. If lying flat, it is as well to sit on the edge of the bed before standing up — a discovery made by many pregnant women, who are also likely to suffer from it.

DOCTORS are frequently asked by patients about ailments that would necessitate restrictions on driving. Even more often, doctors feel obliged to bring this issue up themselves, even if it means missing out on a bottle of whisky at Christmas from a grateful patient.

The DVLA sends a booklet to GPs which provides guidance on this thorny subject. Now Dr Nicholas Millard, a GP in Malvern, Worcestershire, has teamed up with Boehringer Ingelheim in Bracknell, Berkshire, to produce a revolving disc that gives doctors immediate access to information that helps them to advise their patients.

All the common conditions that make driving unsuitable can be found around

the edge of the disc. Several operations are considered to be a bar to driving for a period. A GP could, for example, centre the disc on a transient ischaemic attack to learn that the ordinary domestic driver who has had his first attack should hide his car keys for a month.

If such a patient was a Group 2 driver — licensed to drive a heavy-goods vehicle or a minibus with more than eight seats — he should be off the driving roster for three months. Drivers in both categories

should consult their doctors before returning to the driver's seat.

Private drivers with high blood pressure do not face a ban, but a heavy-goods driver is barred until blood pressure is reduced to under 180/100.

Angina is only a contraindication to private driving if it is induced by driving, or comes on at rest, when it should be abandoned until the symptoms have been controlled.

Surgery may also make driving hazardous and doctors should consult the DVLA about operations that they think might impair a patient's driving. The same advice applies when it comes to several different groups of drugs (even if they are not actually a bar) that may affect driving skills.

## Warning signs of ischaemia

JONATHAN AITKEN'S transient ischaemic stroke has been widely reported. Initial accounts suggested that he had problems with his vision for a short time but he is now back to normal.

A firm diagnosis of a transient ischaemic attack, TIA, is difficult to make and is dependent on the patient's description of what happened. However, there may be associated conditions — an irregular heartbeat, a narrowed carotid artery to the neck, diabetes, high blood pressure or some other disease process which, when combined with the patient's account, make it highly likely.

Usually patients lose function in part of their body so that there may be temporary weakness in an arm or a leg, loss of sensation or unusual feelings, such as pins and needles. It is not uncommon for there to be a transient loss of vision in one eye, a condition

known as amaurosis fugax. Likewise, hearing can be lost or even the power of speech — aphasia. In any TIA there is a small clot, an embolus, that blocks an artery for a while before moving on.

A TIA is of sudden onset and lasts for only a short time. If it persists for more than 24 hours it is not included in this category. It has to be distinguished from migraine, which can have similar signs and symptoms.

The treatment for a TIA is the treatment for any underlying cause, coupled with anti-clot treatment. Patients will need to take aspirin regularly, combined with Persantin Retard (dipyridamole). Recently a new preparation, Plavix (clopidogrel), has been introduced.

Before TIAs were routinely treated, one out of six patients had suffered a major stroke within five years.

The symptoms include loss of sex drive, erectile dysfunction, lack of vitality, night sweats, aches and pains, depression, irritability, tiredness and loss of energy.

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# The Speer that I knew



Albert Speer was a complex man, fearful of society's vulnerability to charisma — a far cry from the grotesque character depicted in a new play, says Gitta Sereny, author of the definitive biography on Hitler's "great manager".

I went to the theatre last week to see in English a play I had already watched on German television last year. It was called *Speer*.

The last time Albert Speer rang me was on August 31, 1981. My husband and I were in the country for the Bank Holiday weekend, and by the time we heard him saying he was in London for 24 hours and sad not to find us in, it was after 10pm on September 1 and he was dead.

Between that last humorous message — "I wanted to surprise you," spoken in his heavily accented English, no doubt that my husband, whom he particularly liked, could understand him — and our first telephone conversation four years earlier, on July 15, 1977, he had phoned me, oh, probably 50, perhaps even 100 times. After the first year, during which we

initiated with his French counterpart, Jean Bichelonne, in July 1943, "it is inevitable," he said, and indeed it has materialised as the European Union. He was equally prescient about the economic inevitability of national and international mergers within the newspaper and publishing industry and, with it, increasing populism at the expense of quality. And almost the only times he still brought up comparisons with his experience in the Third Reich — he often spoke of his fears above all for the young, of the ever-rising influence of television: "We can only guess the extent to which Goebbels's dominance over radio and all other media programming won millions of minds for Hitler."

I read in my notes of one conversation we had in 1980: I think we were discussing a dreadful film somebody in Hollywood had recently made about him. "Film and, more than that, television, can do this again, I fear, for future potential despots," he said. "And next time, it won't even need a propaganda genius like Goebbels because ambition and competition — ie, money — will drive the powerful visual media to outdo each other in dramatising evil people and evil events even more grippingly, poisoning the young."

Some of this, as I say, are things he said to me not once but many times over the years. We knew each other. Some of it is in letters or essays he wrote in prison and later gave to me. And some of it, of course, is in the book I wrote about him, though not all because the book was already too long. But all of it — representing not only a large part of what he had written, but what he had read, thought about and — if they formed, as examples and even inspiration for the young?

But it is justifiable in modern works concerning personalities who, whatever their discipline or art and however flawed, belong to our time as subjects not only of study and of warning, but also, if they formed, as examples and even inspiration for the young?

A good example is Rolf Hochhuth's famous play of the Sixties, *The Deputy*, about Kurt Gerstein, that fascinatingly ambivalent character of Hitler's time. It shows how a fine playwright deals in an exemplary fashion with a complex personality, providing his audience with all aspects of the character but leaving to them the final decision on his motives.

Although Esther Vilar's *Speer* is reviewed on another page today, I must at least sketch its theme, in so far as it substantiates the moral doubts I am raising. It takes place in 1980, when the 75-year-old Speer is invited to



Albert Speer and Adolf Hitler studying the plans for a new Berlin in 1938.

Speer designed the Zeppelinfeld tribune in Nuremberg, the site of the Nazi rallies



Speer in 1973: he died in 1981.

had spent a good deal of time working at his homes in Heidelberg and the south German mountains exploring his life, and I had accompanied him on some special occasions — book presentations, visits to one-time friends — he hardly ever spoke about the past; his mind, strange perhaps for a man then already over 70, was almost entirely on the future.

Except that, for an occasional mention of a dream he had had the previous night. I finally felt that he rang me every time he had that dream — always the same nightmare, of Hitler knowing that he had betrayed him at the end, and telling him that he knew Speer had wanted to kill him.

Speer foresaw enormous economic developments in Russia, and with them — prophetically, one might think — increasing freedoms accompanied by deep conflicts. He was always certain, and eager to indicate to me every political statement that pointed towards it, of an eventual European economic union, a beginning of which he had tried to

many great playwrights, Shakespeare most of all, engaged in. The greats, writing quite often unauthentically about historical personalities, had no need or inclination to proselytise, but simply adapted their characters to the dramatic needs of their plays.

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deliver a lecture in East Berlin, and afterwards to pay a nostalgic visit to his one-time office and creative lair in the Academy of Arts, where Hitler — strolling almost every night he was in Berlin across the small park that separated the building from his Chancellery — feasted his eyes on Speer's famous model of his planned "Germany", the rebuilt Berlin that was to be the capital of Europe.

His guide on this journey into the past is a journeyman modest and apparently admiring young man called Bauer, who quickly turns into a ruthless inquisitor, uninterested in and ignorant about the real man across from him. He is primarily intent, like virtually all the journalists who interviewed Speer over the years, to prove him a liar in his denial of knowledge about the gas-chambers of the Jews.

In Berlin this part was brilliantly played by Klaus Maria Brandauer, who, in a televised panel discussion after the opening, made a remark of such intelligence and compassion that one will forgive him any mistake, even that of playing Speer in the London pro-

duction, which he also directs.

His comment came after the moderator had asked one of the panel, Heinz Dürr, who until two years ago was head of German railways, whether, if he had held that job under Hitler, he would have kept up — as the incumbent of the time, Theodor Ganzmüller, did — the careful scheduling of the freight trains that took Jews to the extermination camps.

Dürr, a tall, well-dressed

man with a quiet managerial manner, pondered for a long time before he answered: "I have to say yes, I would have. I was a Nazi-educated boy, indoctrinated to do my duty, and this would quite simply and without further thought have been a normal part of duty."

Esther Vilar, sitting next to him, shook her head, smiling at him. "I don't believe you," she said. "You wouldn't have." Dürr tried again. "I know it is very hard to see it today as it was, but that's how we were." Vilar was still smiling: "I think it is a masochistic answer. You don't know yourself," she said, consoling. Sentimentality and prejudice are anathema to art.

And this is where Brandauer came in: "I find it wonderful, Herr Dürr, that you are saying honestly as it was been... You were brought up a Nazi boy and such a person, grown up, you say, would not have reflected, would just have acted as he was taught to do... I am so tired of all those people who, 60 years later, can only manage the answer 'we didn't know'. I'm so grateful to you for facing yourself as you would have been. We cannot, must not, criticise such honesty [storm of applause from the audience], for only this can bring us further."

We cannot go into the means Vilar's interrogator employs to force her Speer into submission. For although factually, often grossly, incorrect, the history of the origin of these quite devastating misinterpretations, which, certainly not of her making, she unfortunately adopted from the subjective writing of others) is too complicated to analyse here.

However, her own almost total lack of understanding of Speer's personality is demonstrated in the last 15 minutes of the play, when the apparent reason for the invitation emerges (I will not give away the real one — disclosed in the last

three minutes — which some people, though not I, might find entertaining). It is that East Germany's head of state, Erich Honecker, was inviting Hitler's great manager, Speer, to save the crumbling economy of East Germany.

Having spent 75 minutes watching the physical antics and above all listening to the choleric responses of Speer — who would never have gone to East Berlin in the first place, and who was the most re-

strained and self-controlled man, manifesting even the deepest anger by total stillness and a quiet, icy voice — one is not surprised when this grotesque figure manifests interest in this offer and even provides a quick and modern solution to the problem of East Germans escaping to the West: a microchip implanted, on some health pretext, into every citizen. "That could be one solution to the problem," he says. One would have laughed if all that ignorance had not been so shocking and all that waste of talent and energy so sad.

In *Vilar's Speer*, the years of his life before and after Hitler never happened: we see nothing of his youth, which caused the breakdown of his morality, we see nothing of the "different man" that the real Speer fought to become. All that any young people (hoping to learn more about this complex figure) will see — indeed, most of us will see, because that is

what the playwright, in her misguided lack of faith in the capacity and power of remorse, wants us to see — is a cold man moved by nothing except ambition who, as Vilar triumphantly shows in those outrageous last 15 minutes, is the same moral zero in 1980 that he was during the 12 years of Hitler's rule.

• Speer runs until March 27 at the Almeida, Islington. 0171-359 4404

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# Sons of the Vikings with axes to grind

When it comes to island life, it's ministers who are insular

You need to be tough to survive in Britain's northern islands. Perhaps that is why the Vikings, who settled there a thousand years ago, chose those fearsome names: Thorfinn Skulldumper, Thorstein the Red, Erik Bloody-Axe, and his daughter Ragnhild, described as "a high-born woman of the tigress-harlot type, a consumer of men, thirsting for the blood of her lovers like a female spider". These days things are more conventional. The Islanders call their children Ryan and Meg, like the rest of us, and their social habits, so far as I can determine, are rather more prosaic than those of their Vikings ancestors. But they still need to be tough.

Standing on a bleak hillside in Orkney last weekend, my ankles deep in mud as a gale whipped the foam off a dark grey sea, I marvelled at how the island farmers hang on. For almost a year now they have had relentless rain, the worst weather conditions that many of them can remember. They have seen their tractors sink into sodden fields, the value of their sheep collapse, their beef hit by the BSE embargo, their milk and cereal prices at rock-bottom and their European subsidies reduced by the strong pound. On top of all this, as islanders, they face the added cost of transport. To ferry a cow from Orkney to Aberdeen costs £2 a head; for sheep it is £5, which is often as much as the sale price at the end of the journey. To fly from the island's capital, Kirkwall, to Edinburgh, costs more than a return flight from London to Málaga. I once worked out that for the price of an air ticket from London to Shetland and back, I could buy a round-trip package to Sydney.

And now comes the Budget, with its steep increase in fuel prices. From behind the dispatch box, the Chancellor was able to describe it as a useful measure for protecting the environment. Higher petrol prices, he argued, would mean fewer cars chocking up polluted high streets; cheaper road fund licences for small cars would penalise big gas-guzzlers, belching out their noxious fumes.

But when your high street is a winding country road and your vehicle is a battered Ford truck, all this talk of aiding the environment rings a little hollow. For the farmer, it simply means another financial burden. Already fuel costs in the Highlands are the highest in the country, and the Chancellor's extra tax will see petrol in Orkney inching close to £4 a gallon, a full pound more than for the motorist on the mainland. The increase in diesel in particular, by 6.1p per litre, was described by one farmer I spoke to as "devastating".

In any other industry, financial penalties of this order would be the cause of furious protest. One can imagine the response from provincial France, where farmers would by now be blocking main roads, releasing live pigs into Downing Street and dumping slurry in ministerial backyards. From Orkney the re-

sponse has been low key, but undeniably bitter. Their farmers are among the most resilient and most efficient in Europe.

They have weathered eco-

nomic recession and have

managed to stay abreast of

agricultural trends. But now

the odds are stacked too

heavily against them.

"This is a very urban-

minded Government," said

one of them, mildly. "They

pay lip service to the country

and the rural economy, but I don't

believe they understand the

reality of farming life."

That is an understatement.

This Government has

presided over an agricultural

economy that has seen a fall in

employment in Scotland of

more than 8 per cent, and a net

reduction of average incomes per farm from £5,000 to a

wretched £416 last year — a

staggering figure. The conse-

quent cost of borrowing has

risen to a total of £1.2 billion,

which means that £30 million

is being paid out in interest

alone. We are in Third World

territory here. Yet what we

hear most about are measures

to establish a right to roam,

access for hill-walkers and

land reform, none of which

seems likely to add a single job

or help a single hill-farmer

avoid bankruptcy.

Ministers, of course, point

to negotiations in Brussels,

and the snail's pace reform of

the CAP. They say that the

United Kingdom is pushing hard for

change. And yet one gains no sense

that rural areas have a voice that is

listened to. What they and, in particular, island economies,

need is a level playing field,

with government fulfilling its role of

ensuring that basic services are

provided at equal prices. Other European

countries have a common fuel

tariff so that prices are

similar all over the country. If

a Mars bar costs the same in

Kirkwall as it does in

Kensington, why not a gallon of petrol?

Other European countries

have a public service obligation,

which ensures that transport

costs are the same per

mile wherever you are. Why not Britain? Why should the

law require that electricity or

gas charges be identical

throughout the country, while

British Airways is allowed to

raise its fares at will, irrespective

of the damage it causes to

fragile rural economies?

This is as good as it gets for any

politician. Mr Brown's personal

popularity can now move in only

one way. But what makes matters

worse, much worse, for the whole

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once people open their pay-slips and

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And when people discover they have

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standard rate of income tax by two

percent.

If not, however, they might just

revert to type. Viking

blood still runs in their veins,

and ministers should remember

that people like Thorfinn

skull-splitter and Erik Bloody-

Axe did not get their names by

merely writing to their MPs.

comment@the-times.co.uk



Magnus Linklater



## Come off it, Gordon

The Chancellor should be honest about his tax rises, or pay the price

A politician at the peak of his popularity and power faces an obvious problem: there is nowhere to go but down. This surely ought to be a worry for Gordon Brown. I say this partly because of the growing sense, inspired by the changeover plan for the euro, that the whole Blair Government is in danger of succumbing to a generalised hubris, while William Hague is finally beginning to get a grip on his job. After the ecstatic reception accorded this week to his third Budget, Mr Brown now faces a much more specific and concrete problem. "Everyone's a winner — guaranteed prize for every reader," gushed *The Sun* headline yesterday morning. "Apologies for Brown-hunting, but this is brilliant — he's helped every one of us," was the considered view on *The Mirror's* front-page.

This is as good as it gets for any politician. Mr Brown's personal popularity can now move in only one way. But what makes matters worse, much worse, for the whole Government is that the feverish expectations created by these headlines are going to be disappointed once people open their pay-slips and penetrate the veils of deception so skillfully flourished by Mr Brown. And when people discover they have been deceived, they are apt to become angry.

A portent of future trouble could be seen in Parliament yesterday, when the Prime Minister was trapped by Mr Hague into uttering a straightforward untruth he will live to regret. "How much has the Government raised taxes in its first three Budgets?" Mr Hague repeated loudly. "We have not raised taxes, we have cut them," Tony Blair insisted again and again. Yet this was simply false. As shown unambiguously in the Government's own Budget statement, taxes have risen in each of the past two years and will rise even more in the next financial year. In 1999-2000 the total tax increase will be £3.3 billion in cash terms or £2.6 billion once the automatic increases resulting from inflation are taken into account. In later years, the tax burden will rise even more sharply if Mr Brown sticks to the plan he has just outlined. The increase, in relation to an indexed base, will be £3.6 billion in 2000-01 and £4.1 billion in 2001-02. This last tax increase will be roughly equivalent to raising the standard rate of income tax by two percent.

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comment@the-times.co.uk



Anatole Kaletsky

greater riches in the years beyond. I also support the restructuring of family support and national insurance, which will see many middle-class and skilled manual workers paying £500 extra in national insurance per year. What I object to, however, is the pretence that all of these "stealth taxes" are completely painless and politically irrelevant, simply because they do not show up on our monthly pay-slips. I object to this partly out of respect for democracy and honesty, but also for less pompous reasons. In trying to deceive the public, Mr Brown risks more than discredit to his own Government. He also puts at risk the steady improvement in Britain's public finances initiated by Norman Lamont and Kenneth Clarke, as well as Labour's own hopes of a better-managed and stronger public sector. Worse still, he threatens the generally excellent prospects for the British economy in the years ahead.

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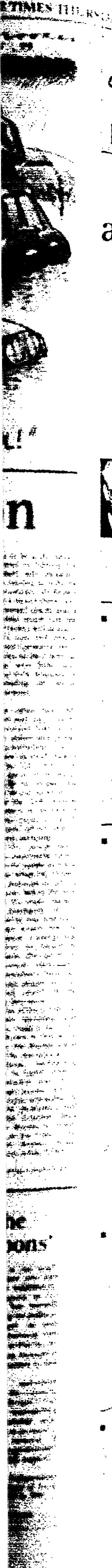
**"There is nothing moral about our Government sitting like a rabbit in the headlights while a dictator acquires nuclear, chemical and biological weapons"**

David Hart

the Government's goals for the nation. It should identify present and potential threats, not just to the State, but also to its ambitions. Once a national policy is in place, our diplomacy can have clear objectives — by no means always the case under Robin Cook — and a defence policy can be created that will give our diplomacy authority. If diplomacy fails, as it has in Iraq, it is much easier to secure public acceptance for the use of force.

The Cold War may be over, Armageddon postponed, but that does not mean that we do not face real and present threats. Events in far off lands, of which we know little, can have a real effect on our national welfare, especially now the global economy interconnects the world so comprehensively. Britain exports

intelligence assistance. That gives us a capability way beyond what we could afford to develop alone. With the old Soviet armoury under less than complete control



## CHINA WORRIES

Nuclear spies, partisan politics and a troubled US strategy

Foreign policy plays a less decisive role in American presidential elections than it does in countries with far less demanding global trade and security interests. But every so often, as with the Vietnam War, policy can throw grit into the party oysters. For Bill Clinton, and even more for Al Gore whose campaign this will be in 2000, it cannot be good news that the Clinton "strategic partnership" with China could be turning into just such a piece of grit.

That partnership policy had already come under fierce fire before the developments of this week. The mainstream view is still that America must handle China's growing military and economic might by treating it, in hope, as a responsible "status quo" power. But there are dozens of vociferous counter-voices, both on left and right. The emotive and divisive post-1949 debate about "who lost China?" subsided after 1979, when Deng Xiaoping's modernisation drive started to open the country up. But distrust of Beijing surged up again with the Tiananmen massacre ten years ago and the new Chinese missile build-up on the Taiwan Straits raises fears that "who lost Taiwan" could be the awkward political question of the future.

The "China question" has always had the potential to arouse Americans of all political persuasions. Democrats, and not only Democrats, are made restive by China's suppression of dissidents, repression in Tibet and the impact of its huge trade surplus with the US on American jobs. Republicans, who have long been exercised by abortion, religious persecution, copyright infringements, the suspicion that the Administration is weakening its support for Taiwan and China's part in nuclear weapons proliferation, have broadened their attack since questions surfaced in 1996 about illegal Chinese campaign contributions to the Democrat campaign coffers. Doubts in all quarters about Chinese ambitions and behaviour have been gravely exacerbated by evidence that, both legally and illegally, China has been acquiring massive quantities of militarily-sensitive American technology. This is a combustible combination. The

dismissal this week on suspicion of nuclear espionage of Wen Ho Lee, a Chinese-American weapons designer at the Los Alamos nuclear laboratory, has merely applied a match. Secrets passed by him to Beijing are believed to have enabled China to develop multiple-warhead missiles as sophisticated as Britain's Trident-2. This espionage, as the Clinton Administration emphasises, took place a decade ago, under the Bush Administration; but the Democrat White House knew about Mr Wen's activities as far back as 1996 and has come under opportunistic Republican attack for being slow to act, for hiding the truth from Congress and for putting the relationship with China above other security issues.

The case is obviously serious in itself, with the damage to national security ranked by some in the CIA as greater even than that caused by the convicted spy, Aldrich Ames. But it also follows hard upon December's unanimous finding by a House of Representatives committee that US national security has been damaged by China's success in obtaining other sensitive US technology. House Republicans accuse the Administration of delay in publishing this report in declassified form.

The Senate normally veers to mainstream views on China. But its Intelligence Committee now wants to make public parts of its own inquiry into the 1996 campaign funds scandal and into US satellite sales to China. Although partisan politics is at work here — disclosure could seriously damage Al Gore — Senator Trent Lott's talk of charging Administration officials with contempt of Congress may reflect a wider change in Senate attitudes.

In truth, the US needs to worry as much about China's current weakness as its future strength, as is clear from the bleak picture given to the current session of China's People's Congress by Zhu Rongji, the Prime Minister. But when China's internal difficulties coincide with a fresh drive against dissidents and a truculent tone in foreign policy, that does not help its supporters. With patience strained in the US and pragmatism faltering in China, next month's US-China summit will be a tough test of the troubled Clinton strategy.

## THE BYERS MARKET

The DTI chief cannot afford to go slow on his reforms

The political lifespans of Secretaries of State for Trade and Industry have not been impressive. A dozen figures have occupied that office since it was reconstituted 16 years ago. Not one has lasted much more than three years and Peter Mandelson served a mere five months before his enforced resignation. This instability has undoubtedly damaged the DTI within Whitehall. While this is neither a tragedy for British trade nor for industry, there are positive initiatives that the department can take to expand enterprise and competition. It is to the credit of Stephen Byers that these appear to be his objectives.

In a statement to the House of Commons yesterday Mr Byers placed his emphasis on populist new inquiries into the price of several high-profile consumer products. The prospect of the electricity industry and those responsible for the cost of compact discs being called to account will doubtless resonate with consumers. The extension of the league table culture to include the many providers of mortgages will also win plaudits. An international price comparison might also prove instructive. The most significant aspect of his announcement may be the element which, for the moment, contains the fewest details. Mr Byers has outlined his support for a sharp shift in the shape and scope of competition policy.

The Secretary of State argues that a new and independent competition agency should dominate all decisions on mergers. The political dimension of current arrangements has long been controversial. The creation of a small business service,

providing a single focus for a series of initiatives that are presently dispersed across several departments, is plainly sensible. It is also encouraging that Mr Byers has maintained his predecessor's active interest in the promotion of science.

Mr Byers would clearly like to encourage a more transparent approach to competition policy on the lines of the American model. This is a noble aim but will require further institutional reform if it is to be realised. A new independent competition authority will need to be more than simply a renamed version of the present Monopolies and Mergers Commission if it is to be effective. The OFT, as currently constituted, is unlikely to pursue its expanded mandate with vigour. Mr Byers should make these issues the central priority of his forthcoming consultation document.

There is also little point in reducing the capacity of politicians to intervene in competition decisions if they can achieve similar ends by different methods. If new institutions are to be truly independent, they should set their own agendas rather than respond to ministers' instructions. The international price comparison and other hard evidence should determine the decision to launch an investigation. This would be an accurate replication of US arrangements. It would also ensure that sections of industry did not find themselves under constant inspection. Mr Byers has displayed sound instincts which can be made concrete in substance. He has the chance to shape a policy that serves the interests of entrepreneurs and consumers.

## JACK THE DRIPPER

Ways of seeing a load of new Pollocks

"Is he America's greatest living artist?" asked *Time* magazine in 1949. A key New York critic had recently hailed a brooding, puzzled-looking, painter as the most important artist of the age. But many, this landmark article explained, still believed that Jackson Pollock, the man in question, made "nothing more than interesting if inexplicable decoration". Still others condemned his paintings as degenerate — "as unpalatable as yesterday's macaroni".

Pollock may be dead now, thrown from a car and slammed headlong into a tree at the age of 44. He habitually drove drunk, as if tempting the demons which had taunted him throughout his life to take their final toll. But critical confusion about his stature has long since been cleared up. Pollock is hailed as a founding father of Abstract Expressionism. His legend hangs around him, like a cloud. The wild, personality of this disorderly, live-hard, dying young American is marketed as part of his work. And as a major Pollock retrospective opens at the Tate, London, may congratulate itself for the second time this year. Once again, the capital becomes the only European venue for a most significant show.

Yet visitors flocking to see the work would do well to remember the doubts of

that *Time* article published 50 years ago. A generation of critics have sealed up a reputation with red tape. Only uncertainty will return it fresh, as alive and enigmatic as it was meant to be. Spontaneity was the essence of Pollock's raw, sprawling style, of the paint splashed straight from the psyche of a rebellious boho. The canvas was less a construction than an arena of action. What unfurled on the long bolts of cotton rolled out across his Long Island studio was less a portrayal of intention than an improvisation, a dazzling record of some spur of the moment, dance. The Tate judiciously installs a video of Pollock in his rotunda so that visitors may watch the artist at work, swinging, pouring, spattering, dripping. It is an important reminder of how his work became what it is.

There will still be visitors who see nothing but macaroni. "Apocalyptic wallpaper" was one well recorded put down. Others will be surprised by the squiggles and splatters, awed by the energy, or confounded by a scary sense of void. It does not much matter. Instinct is more important than intellect in this show. Pollock himself said: "Don't look for anything. React". And that is what thousands of visitors, in positive and negative ways, are about to do.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

### Does every teacher need a laptop?

From Mr Tony Holland

Sir, Under which definition has the "family" benefited from the Chancellor's Budget (reports and details, March 10)? If family includes in its meaning an employed husband/father, an unemployed wife/mother, who acts (by choice) as principal carer for a child/children, then the Government has sent a clear anti-family message.

Gordon Brown is scrapping the married couple's allowance in April 2000 and a further 12 months will elapse before the launch of the children's tax credit. Further, the Chancellor has structured the proposed credit in such a way that it clearly discriminates against a family where only one parent earns. Under his scheme two parents can earn £30,500 apiece and claim the children's tax credit, whereas only one in the household earning more than £38,500 loses the right.

Tony Blair and his Government need to state clearly what they define as family.

Yours faithfully,  
TONY HOLLAND,  
5 Thornhill Square, N1 1BQ.  
acholland@portables.ngfl.gov.uk  
March 10.

From Mr Trevor Kemish

Sir, As a non-smoking, enterprising, hard-working, self-employed, property-owning family man my disposable income will fall following Gordon Brown's Budget.

I should like to know what I am doing wrong and in an effort to redress this situation would be interested to know where I can purchase a reliable, practical car big enough for my family and business but with an engine of less than 1100cc.

Yours,  
TREVOR KEMISH,  
17 Whitebeam Road,  
Hedge End, Southampton SO30 0PY.  
March 10.

From Mr Peter White

Sir, I find Gordon Brown's 6p rise in the price of diesel fuel both disappointing and perplexing.

I have just exchanged a small petrol car for a small diesel car and have thereby almost exactly doubled the miles I can achieve with one gallon of fuel. It would seem to me, therefore, that diesel emissions would have to be 100 per cent more polluting than those of petrol to justify Mr Brown's actions, as I burn half the amount of fuel to travel the same distance. Even the gloomiest scientific reports do not suggest that this is the case, indeed it is my understanding that a well-tuned diesel engine is less damaging to the atmosphere than a petrol engine. In the rest of Europe diesel remains a cheaper option than petrol.

Mr Brown wants us to use public transport: nearly all buses and taxis run on diesel.

Yours faithfully,  
PETER WHITE,  
Southview,  
Upper Guildown Road,  
Guildford, Surrey GU2 5EZ.  
March 10.

From Mr D. J. Brock

Sir, The usual oversimplification and claims by Mr and Mrs Average to be a pound or two better off. In fact, as happens every time, road fuel goes up so everything goes up.

Yours faithfully,  
D. J. BROCK,  
76 Buchanan Road,  
Rugby, Warwickshire CV22 6AZ.  
March 10.

From Mr Jeremy J. H. Westwood

Sir, The real losers from yesterday's Budget are those who live and work in the country. We already suffer from the Government's ridiculous beef on the bone ban and other factors, and now face a huge rise in fuel costs, with no other means of transport available. Does anyone care?

Yours faithfully,  
JEREMY J. H. WESTWOOD,  
Mire House,  
Cautley, Cumbria LA10 5LY.  
jeremy1943@aol.com  
March 10.

From Mr David Lindsay

Sir, I could not believe my eyes when reading in the Chancellor's speech that the levy on business use of energy is to be offset by a reduction in employers' national insurance contributions.

Apart from the fact that there is no obvious connection between payroll size and energy use, such raiding of the national insurance fund, when there are so many legitimate claims on it, is shameless.

Yours faithfully,  
DAVID LINDSAY,  
36 Orchard Coombe,  
Whitchurch Hill, Reading RG8 7QL.  
March 10.

From Mr Peter A. Rushforth

Sir, The Chancellor has increased cigarettes by 17p. Is the Government planning to reintroduce the 1p coin?

Yours truly,  
P. A. RUSHFORTH,  
36 Sutton Drive,  
Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5BQ.  
March 10.

From Mrs Susan Gove

Sir, From my office in the library at St George's Hospital Medical School I can see Dr Jenner's cow encased in glass on the wall.

The cow moved to Tooting when the school and hospital relocated in the 1970s from Hyde Park Corner, where it had hung in the library

Though I have spent much time on the Net I fail to see much use for it in the classroom. Having one computer on the Net has been useful for demonstration purposes, e-mail, downloaded sites for the pupils' later reference and teachers' research. I believe books and materials come higher in our priorities than machine-reliant technology such as the Net, which is often slow.

As for buying each teacher a laptop, I consider this a waste of money. Laptop computers are considerably more expensive to purchase and mend than desktop computers and they are more vulnerable to breakage and theft.

Before we consider expanding information technology in our education system we should make sure all children have access to our present service. I was in a mainstream comprehensive school recently where a class of 14-year-olds had one lesson on the computer a week (two to a machine), in one term of the year. This is not acceptable.

Yours faithfully,  
FRANCIS CHARTERS,  
c/o 11 Eastnor Grove,  
Leamington Spa,  
Warwickshire CV31 1LD.  
March 6.

From Mr Michael Barratt

Sir, The head teacher of my son's secondary school has just written to every parent expressing concern that school budgets in Sussex are likely to be cut this year.

Even now there are not sufficient textbooks either in the classroom or for pupils to take away for homework or GCSE coursework. The £2,000 given by the Chancellor in the Budget to every school for books will, I suspect, only partially alleviate the situation.

Class sizes are about 30, but over 25 per cent of students are designated as having special needs. I believe that in such an environment, academically able students, whether they have special needs or not, are severely disadvantaged — an inequality of opportunity recorded in the school's GCSE results last year, when only 24 per cent achieved A-C grades in five subjects.

Providing each teacher with a laptop for home use may have merit, but what are my son's teachers going to do with them — record continuing failure on spreadsheets and charts?

Yours faithfully,  
MICHAEL BARRATT,  
11 Tussoc Close,  
Crawley, Sussex RH11 3BE.  
mrb@eurobell.co.uk  
March 10.

### English as spoken on her estuaries

From Mr Edward Grayson

Sir, Penny Wark's endorsement of Beryl Bainbridge's condemnation of regional accents (article "Why Beryl speaks for the nation", March 4) has a precedent from equally authoritative sources, the immortal C. B. Fry, and Lord Birkenhead.

In Fry's *Life Worth Living*, published in 1939, he recalled the vintage years at Wadham, Oxford, in the early 1890s, with F. E. Smith, John Simon and others destined for high office, and particularly the unashamed ambition of "F. E." before receiving his peerage title taken from his native Birkenhead upon appointment as Lord Chancellor.

Fry emphasised how, when they came up together in 1892, F. E. had a marked Lancashire accent, which soon disappeared. When I enjoyed the fruits of friendship with Fry during the early 1950s while I was persuading him to contribute a generous foreword to *Corinthians and Cricketers*, I queried tentatively whether this was a possible exaggeration, distilled by the mists of time.

Unhesitatingly the reply was: "It was an accent as broad as Gracie Fields'. As soon as he got rid of it I realised he intended to do something with his life."

I am sir,  
Yours faithfully,

EDWARD GRAYSON,  
9-12 Bell Yard, WC2A 2LF.  
March 5.

From Mr E. S. Hooper

Sir, George Bernard Shaw, Fabian Socialist, in his preface to *Pygmalion* (1913, and still, like all Shawian faces, worth reading) made the point that society would be less divided if we all sounded the same when speaking. Shaw took it for granted that we should all speak decent, grammatical English.

Responsible radio and television could be very helpful. Instead, irresponsible radio and television spread "Estuary English", or what Ms Penny Wark describes as faux-Essex, so that international co-operation has been replaced by inner-national co-operation, although, to compensate, missals have been replaced by missals.

Yours faithfully,

STANLEY HOOPER,  
Thurlow House,  
Epworth, Doncaster DN9 1JU.  
March 4.

### BBC 'put-downs'

From Mr Adam Clapham

Sir, The BBC has always been a master of the diplomatic put-down. Its rebuttal of Lord Hussey of North Bradley's criticism — "Much has happened in the media world in the three years since Lord Hussey left" (report, "Hussey attacks BBC spending on bureaucracy", later editions, March 4) — has an icy effectiveness.

Some years ago the BBC was assailed by an outraged Conservative politician whose contribution was edited from a programme I produced. I was asked to draft a reply for the Director-General. I could think of no explanation for my conduct, other than the truth: the contributor had been crashing boring.

In a masterful paraphrase the Director-General responded to him: "I think you must admit that your contribution was not as effective as it might have been."

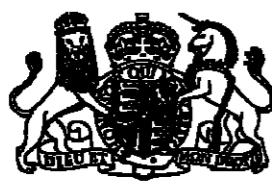
Peace was restored.

Yours faithfully,  
ADAM CLAPHAM,  
(Director), Gryphon Films,  
The Chrysalis Building,  
Bramley Road, W10 6SP.  
March 4.

### Bishops in the Lords

From Mr Nicolas Walter

Sir, If it is wrong, as it surely is, for any religious organisation to have the special advantage of its representatives being automatically included in Parliament (letters, February 22 and March 2), it is surely also wrong for any religious organisation to have the special disadvantage of its representatives being automatically excluded from Parliament.



## COURT CIRCULAR

**BUCKINGHAM PALACE**  
March 10: Her Excellency Madame Mariana Hinsa was received in audience this morning by The Queen and presented the Letters of Recall of her predecessor and her own Letters of Credence as Ambassador of Niger to the Court of St James's.

Mr John Shepherd (Deputy Under Secretary, Foreign and Commonwealth Office) was present.

The Archbishop of Canterbury was received in audience by The Queen.

The Queen held a Council at 12.30pm.

There were present: The Right Honourable Margaret Beckett (President), The Right Honourable Lord Carter (Captain, Gentleman-at-Arms), The Right Honourable Lord Hurd (Lord Advocate) and the Right Honourable Jack Cunningham (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster).

The Baroness Hollis of Heigham, Miss Hilary Armstrong, MP, Mr Richard Caborn, MP, and Mr Ian McCartney, MP, were sworn in as Members of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council.

Mr Alex Galloway was in attendance as Clerk of the Council.

The King of Swaziland and Her Royal Highness Inkhosi太后 visited The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh this afternoon and remained to lunch.

The following were invited: Prince Muzigama, Princess Lungiswalo, Councillor T.V. Mthethwa (Chief of Zombozwa Area and Senior Governor to Royal Household), the Hon A.M.H. Shabangu (Minister, Foreign Affairs and Trade), His Excellency the Rev Percy S. Mngomezu (High Commissioner to Eritrea), Sir John Kerr and Mr John Duley.

A Guard of Honour, found by the 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards, was mounted in the Quadrangle.

The Major General Commanding Household Division and the Field Officers in Brigade Waiting were present.

The Right Honourable Tony Blair, MP (Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury) had an Audience of The Queen this evening.

**BUCKINGHAM PALACE**  
March 10: The Duke of Edinburgh, Founder and Chairman of the International Trustees of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award International Association, this after-

noon departed RAF Northolt for Belgium.

His Royal Highness this evening attended a Dinner for the Benelux Award in Antwerp, Belgium.

Brigadier Miles Hunt-Davis is in attendance.

**ST JAMES'S PALACE**

March 10: This morning The Prince of Wales opened a new branch of Lloyds Bank in Buenos Aires.

His Royal Highness later visited the Buenas Ondas Organic Farming Project for street children.

This afternoon His Royal Highness visited the Siderar Steel Plant and inaugurated a joint UK-Argentinian material handling and equipment factory.

**BUCKINGHAM PALACE**

March 10: The Duke of York gave a reception for Understanding Industry at St James's Palace.

March 10: Today is the Anniversary of the Birth of The Prince Edward.

His Royal Highness, Trustee

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award International Foundation, this afternoon attended a Gold Award Ceremony followed by a Reception for The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Young Canadians Challenge, in the Hotel Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

**BUCKINGHAM PALACE**

March 10: The Princess Royal this morning arrived at Kyoto Station, Japan, and was received by Her Majesty's Consul-General, Osaka (Mr Rodney Cumming).

Her Royal Highness attended a lunch with Non Governmental Organisation representatives at Doh, Kyoto.

The Princess Royal this afternoon visited Warashibe-en, Institute for Disabled, Hirakata City.

Her Royal Highness, President, Save the Children this evening attended a Reception and Dinner at the Imperial Hotel, Osaka.

**KENSINGTON PALACE**

March 10: The Duke of Gloucester this afternoon visited Kent and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant (The Lord Kingsdown, KG).

His Royal Highness, Commissioner, English Heritage, this afternoon visited Bradbourne House, East Malling, Kent.

The Duke of Gloucester, as Grand Prior, The Order of St John, afterwards opened the new St John Ambulance County Headquarters and Training Centre, West Malling, Kent.

Lord Mayor

The Lord Mayor gave a luncheon yesterday at the Mansion House for Members of Parliament for London constituencies. Among those present were:

The Hon Peter Brooke, CH, MP, Mr Eric Forth, MP, Mr Miles Gapes, MP, Ms Joen Ryan, MP, Mr Michael Howard, MP, Mr Tony Blair, MP, Mr John Bercow, MP, Mr Alan Beale, MP, Ms Judith Charnley, MP, Mr Harry Cohen, MP, Mr Iain Duncan-Smith, MP, Mr Michael Ellis, MP, Mr Edward Fox, MP, Ms Joanne Freeman, MP, Mr Ken Livingstone, MP, and Ms Linda Popham, MP.

Lady Mayors

The Lady Mayors gave a luncheon at the Mansion House yesterday for the City's livery companies concerned with the equestrian world. Mr Richard Page, MP, Mr Michael Mates, MP, and representatives of the Saddlers', Blacksmiths', Farriers', Loriners' and Farmers' Companies were among the guests.

Academy of Experts

Mr Michael Cohen, outgoing Chairman of The Academy of Experts, was the host at a luncheon held yesterday at the RAF Club to mark the change in officers. Lord Howe of Aberconwy, CH, QC, Sir Donald Harrison, Her Honour John Graham Hall, Mr Richard Freeman (chairman elect) and Miss Marion Simmons, QC, were among the guests.

United Grand Lodge of England

Lord Farnham, Pro Grand Master, presided at the Quarterly Communication of the United Grand Lodge of England held yesterday at Freemasons' Hall.

University news

Emmanuel College, Cambridge Elected into Honorary Fellowships with effect from February 15, 1999: Peter Michael Beckwith, MA, Jagganath Nath Dhamija, MA.

Church in Wales

Diocese of Swansea and Brecon The Rev Arnette Francis, Curate of Cockett, to be Rector of Llanelli (Glynn).

The Rev D. Ishawy Davies, Vicar of Pontioli w Llanydynam, St Davids diocese, to be Rector of Ystradgynlais, Swansea and Brecon diocese.

Today's birthdays

Mr Douglas Adams, author, 47; Mr Terence Alexander, former president, Malta, 76; Sir John Banen, former Physician to The Queen, 75; Mr K.L. Bedell-Pearce, director, international development, Prudential Corporation, 53; Professor A.O. Vets, former Principal, Royal Veterinary College, 72; Dr John Beynon, former Principal, King's College London, 69; Miss Louise Brough, tennis player, 76; Lord Congleton, 69; Sir Kenneth Dower, former President, Corpus Christi College, Oxford, 79; Mr Dennis Enright, writer, 79; Mr Peter Eyns, actor, 57; Mr Michael Flesch, QC, 59; Mr David Gentleman, painter and designer, 69; Mr Jonathan Gessner, director, Marlowe's Rare Books, 59; Professor T.C. Gray, former Bishop of Victoria, 86; Viscount Hailsham, 86; Viscount Hailsham, 86; Lord Lawrence of Blaen, 67; Sir Henry Manning, former chairman, British Tourist Authority, 70; Mr Timothy Mason, director, Museums and Galleries Commission, 54; Vice-Admiral Sir Christopher Morgan, 60; Air Marshal Sir Alec Morris, 73; Lord Mowbray and Stourton, 76; Mr Rupert Murdoch, chairman and

chief executive, The News Corporation, 68; Miss Erica O'Donnell, founder, Study Centre for the History of the Fine and Decorative Arts, 79; Lord Justice Pill, 61; Mrs Jennifer Smith, former Principal, Harrogate Ladies College, 49; Mr Richard Smith, Editor, *British Medical Journal*, 47; Sir Keith Speed, MP, director, Newbridge Partnership, 65; Sir Ian Tammam, KT, former Lord-Lieutenant of Morayshire, 80; Miss Patricia Tindale, architect, 73; Mr Ron Todd, trade unionist, 72; Sir Peter Walker, chairman, SmithKline Beecham, 68; Mr J. Whybrow, chief executive, Philips Holding, 52; Lord Wilberforce, 92; Mr Alan Yentob, director of television, BBC Broadcast, 52.

Church of Wales

The Rev Arnette Francis, Curate of Cockett, to be Rector of Llanelli (Glynn).

The Rev D. Ishawy Davies, Vicar of Pontioli w Llanydynam, St Davids diocese, to be Rector of Ystradgynlais, Swansea and Brecon diocese.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

On Saturday 6th March 1999 at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, to Anna-Louise (née Reilly) and Mr David (née) Thomas.

CAPPI - On February 28th, 1999, to Kay (née Bayliss) and Graham (née) Cappa, a beautiful daughter, Anna-Carrie.

COVET - On 6th March 1999 at The Royal Free Hospital, to Alison (née D'Arcis) and David, a son, Daniel, and a brother, a son, Stephen.

GRADY - On March 6th, to Stibbons (née Simpson-Nairn) and Ian, a daughter, Emily Corrilia Clare, a sister, Patrick and Devaline.

GILES - On February 27th, in Eastbourne, to Caroline and Nicholas, a daughter, Charlotte Annelise Carmal, a sister, for Philippa and James.

GODFREY - On March 5th at The Portland Hospital, to Evelyn (née Vlachouli) and Peter, a daughter, Olivia Daisy, a sister for Angela Rose.

NEVER - On 8th March at The Portland Hospital, to Philippa and James, a daughter, Sophie.

LYNCH - On March 7th at The Portland Hospital, to Kirsty (née Gregerson and Christian), a daughter, Natasha Sophia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

On Saturday 6th March 1999 at The Royal Free Hospital, to Daniel (née O'Dowd) and Martin, a son, Joseph Patrick.

DEATHS

BOOTH - Gwendoline, passed away on Monday 8th March, mother of Elizabeth and William.

COATES - Travers (Toby), 80, died on Monday 8th March, brother of Peter and Paul.

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## NEWS

**Fines for traders who overcharge**

A nationwide assault on high prices was promised by the Government yesterday as part of a package to boost competition and enterprise.

The Trade Secretary is taking new powers to tackle retailers and utility companies who charge more for their goods than their counterparts do overseas, and companies face heavy fines if they breach anti-competition rules. .... Pages 1, 4

**Budget leaflet 'is hiding tax rises'**

■ Gordon Brown's presentation of the Budget was referred to the public spending watchdog amid accusations that the Chancellor was misleading millions of voters. Francis Maude, the Shadow Chancellor, claimed that a leaflet explaining Budget measures to the public, and produced with taxpayers' money, amounted to "Labour Party propaganda" .... Pages 1, 10, 11

**Prince does the tango**

At the height of a delicate mission to mend fences with our former adversary Argentina, the Prince of Wales allowed himself to be lured onto a dance floor to do the tango .... Pages 1, 3

**Rapist escapes jail**

A rapist who bombarded his victim with threatening letters and set fire to her house escaped from prison, seven months after he was made a "trusted" inmate. .... Page 1

**Geldof reaps £6m**

Bob Geldof and the Labour Peer Lord Waheed Ali are expected to receive up to £6 million each from the sale of their Planet 24 television company to Carlton Communications .... Page 2

**Catwalk lures Camilla**

Camilla Parker Bowles has joined the ranks of glamorous film stars who frequent international fashion shows .... Page 3

**Body left for months**

A former model has been found dead in her flat, where her body was left for up to three months. Neighbours claimed that her "friends" continued to use the flat to inject heroin .... Page 3

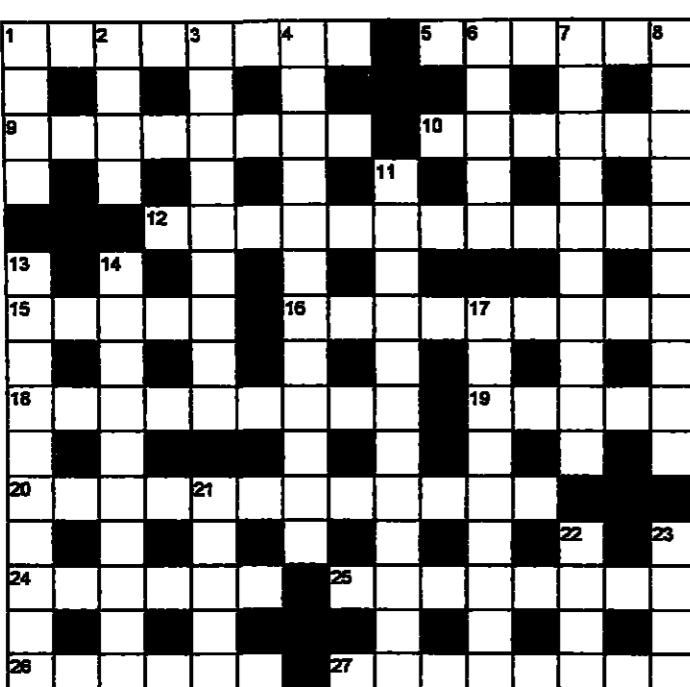
**Pollock digitised**

Hundreds of photographs and films documenting Jackson Pollock at work on his paintings have been fed into a computer, suggesting that his art was not as abstract as it seems .... Page 5

**Hypnosis is last gasp for smokers**

If the people who packed a theatre for a display of mass hypnosis are to be believed, 700 men and women gave up smoking yesterday. Cigarette butts littered the pavement outside the New London theatre as hundreds of smokers took what they hoped would be their last nicotine fix while queuing to see the hypnotist Paul McKenna .... Page 7

## THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 21,048



**ACROSS**  
1 Desire a piano, small and dainty (8).  
5 A way into mine over the hill (4,2).  
9 Toughened girl got better after ditching husband (8).  
10 Empty words in latest song (3,3).  
12 Like a few shots of money, shifted into profession (12).  
15 Conductor describing Purcell's work for St Cecilia's Day (5).  
16 Offensive weapon permit held - what an obscenity (9).  
18 Money owed round university, a gambling sum - one was brought to court (9).  
19 Boasting about home wins (5).  
20 It's rude to stop working without consent (12).

## Solution to Puzzle No 21,047

**BLUESHIP SERAPH**  
C N E T L A I  
LOCAL RADIO COPY  
I O E L W K E  
VANISHING CREAM  
I I C T C O T M  
AGELESS CATSPAW  
R E C R P  
RUNNING SHIVERS  
S E I N D D A  
UPWARD MOBILITY  
A P Y R O G W  
CLIO BACKSTITCH  
L R O B I O E  
SYNTAX ELECTRON

**Times Two Crossword, page 52**

**WEATHER**  
London Royal and Weather conditions  
UK Weather - All regions 0326 444 510  
UK Weather - All regions 0326 401 410  
UK Inside 0236 401 746  
UK Outside 0236 401 747  
National Weather 0326 401 748  
Continental Europe 0326 401 749  
Cross country 0326 401 750  
Planning to Heathrow & Gatwick airports 0326 407 202

**Weather by Fax**  
Fax 0236 407 202 followed by area number from 001 to 099  
West Country 410 234 914 Ireland 410 241 410  
Midlands 410 234 401 297  
Scotland 410 234 401 298  
Wales 410 234 401 299  
N Ireland 410 234 401 290  
Metfors Marine 410 290

**World City Weather**   
153 destinations world wide  
by Phone fax 0326 411 216  
or stay connected 0326 410 202

**Motoring**  
Europe Country by Country 0326 401 882  
Europe fuel costs 0326 401 883  
Flight Information 0326 401 884  
Emergency Phone 0326 401 885  
Le Shuttle 0326 401 886

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